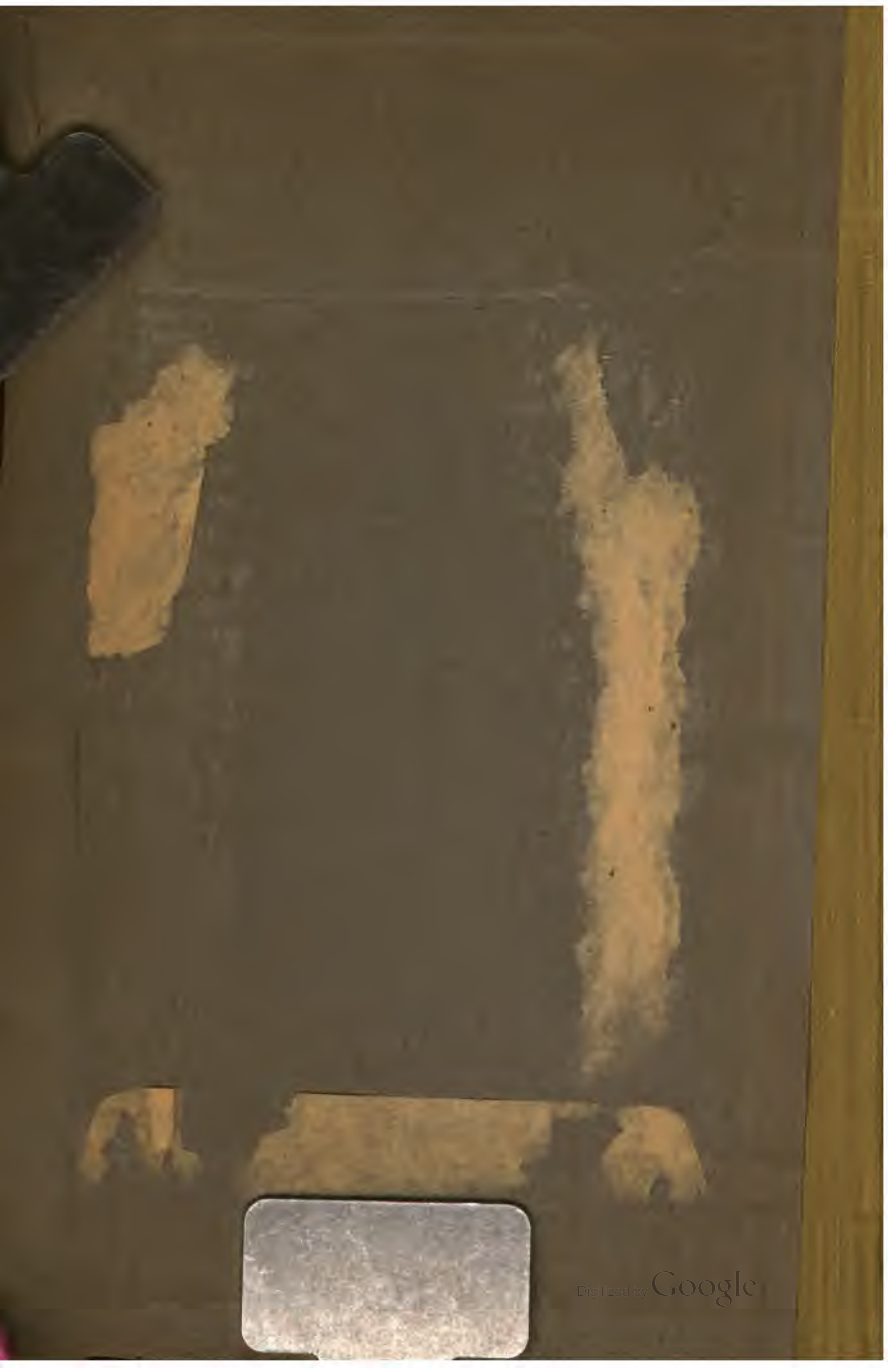
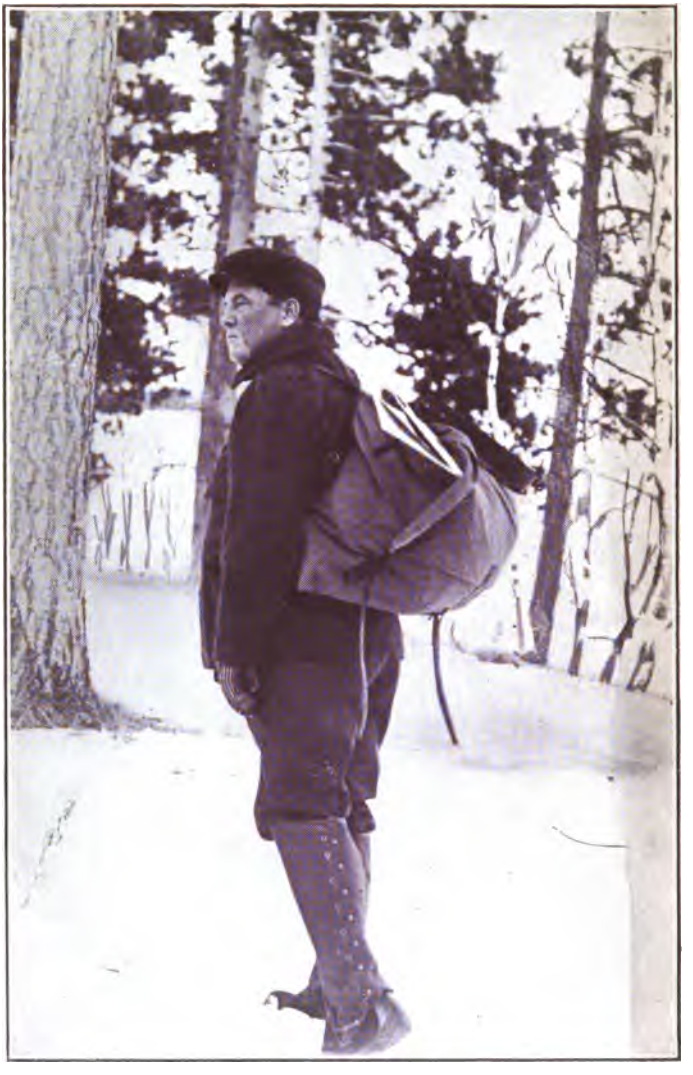


The Parish of The Pines



HIS NAME WAS HIGGINS—FRANK HIGGINS.

The Parish of The Pines

The Story of Frank Higgins The Lumberjacks' Sky Pilot

By
THOMAS D. WHITTLES

ILLUSTRATED

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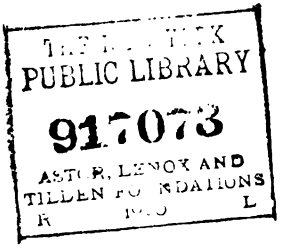

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LOVINGLY DEDICATED

TO MY

PARTNER

Sally

THE PARISH OF THE PINES

"Where the winter's chill is deep and still,
Where summer days are long,
Where sighing breeze and branches fill
The air with sob and song,
There lies a parish of the Lord
No wall or street confines:
There 'waits the coming of the Lord
The Parish of the Pines.

"No tower uplifts its gilded spire
Above a house of prayer,
No organ tower or swaying choir
Makes sweetest music there,
For 'tis a vineyard choked with weeds
And lush with tangled vines;
Yea, much it lacks and much it needs —
The Parish of the Pines.

"Yet word of God is word of God
In camp or pulpit told,
And men of forest and of sod
Await the story old.
'Tis time to hew away the sin
That now the soul confines,
And let a little sunshine in
The Parish of the Pines."

—Douglas Malloch.

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I

THE LUMBERJACKS' SKY-PILOT

SOME years ago at a church gathering near the Canadian boundary of Minnesota there was among the visitors a broad-shouldered, wind-beaten Irishman. He was a woodsy chap: he made new acquaintances easily and with contagious heartiness hailed old friends; carried his two hundred pounds happily and laughed with the ripple of a trout stream; and his florid countenance gratefully recalled a guide who had once made the long trail a desire for me and the camp-fire a library of unpublished books. I watched the unknown as he went from one to the other of his friends. With old and new he was equally at ease. Even the diffident adopted him into the circle of the long known. "There's a likable chap!" I thought; and so I found him when I met him.

His name was Higgins—Frank Higgins.

"A minister?" I asked doubtfully, yet wondering.

"Sort of."

"Where do you preach?"

"Wherever I strike a gang of men."

"To 'men only'?"

"Women are not in my line. I've preached to about twelve thousand men this winter." Then he added, as if for accuracy's sake: "And to two women who strayed in from a homesteader's cabin."

We met again at the dining table of my good friend the doctor. It was a jolly repast. The wild goose was done to perfection; and Higgins seasoned it with stories of the wild life attendant on a forest pastorate. The woodsman's narration carried its own conviction. He did not make himself a hero: real heroes seldom do. In fact, he did not realize that he was doing a big, uncommon work; he was only conscious of a big need that none save himself was trying to supply. The simple fellow apparently delighted in his task because it demanded his full strength and gave his untiring hands a chance to help.

There was another guest without whom the narrative would be incomplete. He, also, was an Irishman—a minister who had lately landed from Ulster. Frank Higgins furnished the conversation. The Rev. John McCook provided the interruptions with an

endless array of questions concerning the Pilot, the lumberjacks and the ways of the woods. McCook was blandly simple, amusingly antiquated—a nineteenth century parson straying in the present.

"Now this happened in the town of Tenstrike ——" continued Higgins.

"Tenstrike?" The question came from McCook. "A correct name or a nickname, Mr. Higgins?"

"The map name. Pins all down, a clean board," explained the woodsman.

"Ah, exactly! A clean town, I presume."

"Not on your life! A dirty town in those days. Saloons aplenty—and all that goes with them. But as I was saying, this happened in the town of Tenstrike. The boys were blowing their stakes in the spring of the ——"

"Blowing their stakes!" ejaculated McCook. "What a surprising term! Pray, what does it mean?"

"Spending their money—their earnings—their wages," said Mr. Higgins patiently. "They were breaking the drought and ——"

"Had it been a dry season?" asked the innocent newcomer.

"Yes, it's always dry away from the saloons, unless a bootlegger visits the camp."

"A bootlegger! What is he? And how can he relieve a drought?"

"He's a fellow who carries whiskey around, a sort of human grog-shop, a saloon flea that's hard to put your thumb on. I knew that old man Wilson was in the saloons and started to ——"

"Was Mr. Wilson a parishioner of yours?" questioned the interrupter.

"Sure! All the boys are."

"Pardon me, Mr. Higgins. I understood you to say that Mr. Wilson was an old man."

"Right you are! He was an old boy; and I knew he ought to send his money home to his wife and babies instead of feeding the gamblers and the saloon men. Wilson didn't earn much. He was the road-monkey on the main stem and needed every ——"

"Road-monkey! What? Main stem! That sounds rather—well—ah—arborial. May I—er—inquire ——"

The Sky Pilot looked curiously at the imported minister. "The road-monkey," said he, patiently, "is one who keeps the ice roads so clean that no foreign substance will impede the progress of the logging sleds."

I wondered if this allusion could have a double meaning; but the speaker's face was serious.

"The main stem," he went on, "is the principal logging road leading to the landing."

It was perfectly plain.

"The landing is the place where they unload the logs, I presume?" McCook helped.

"Correct! *Now* you're logging!" heartily commended the Pilot. "Well, anyhow, I hunted high and low for Wilson. And at last I found him in the snake room. He was dead drunk."

"Snake room!" gasped McCook. "Snake room, you say? Did the town have a—a—a menagerie?"

"Well, yes! Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Higgins, joining the generous outburst of pent up mirth. "A menagerie? Sure thing! A visionary menagerie. But it was real enough to satisfy the man seeing the sights. It's the place where they throw the drunks to sleep off the effects of the liquor and knock-out drops. Well," he resumed, "I carried Wilson to a room in the hotel, put him to bed and went through his pockets. They were empty. The runners, by Jove, had rolled him!"

"Had the man been caught in machinery? Was he hurt?" anxiously inquired McCook, showing his interest by hitching his chair closer.

"Yes—the machinery of the devil. We call it rolling a man when the pickpockets go through his clothes."

"Continue your story, Mr. Higgins. I understand. Really I am far too deeply interested to delay it."

"I was thinking of Wilson's poor family. He was returning to them, you see, without a cent, after a winter's work. After a winter's work! I took off his big boots. And out of them rolled one hundred and fifty dollars in bills! In the hurry, you see, the—well—the vampires hadn't tapped his safety deposit. So I had one hundred and fifty dollars to mail to Wilson's family. And that sure did please me!"

"With Mr. Wilson's permission?" questioned Mr. McCook.

"Permission!" cried the Sky Pilot. "Not much!" he added as he passed his plate for another helping of the wild goose. "Before Wilson woke up the money was nearly home."

"A good story! A *real* good story!" said the interrupter. "And now, Mr. Higgins," he drawled, importantly, "what moral do you dráw from the incident?"

Higgins looked hard at the Man of Many Questions. He was puzzled. Then a light

dawned on him. "That happened about three years ago," said he. "I've been pretty busy ever since. And I haven't had time to draw the moral yet. I felt so satisfied over drawing the one hundred and fifty dollars from the boots and sending it to Wilson's family that the drawing of the moral didn't trouble me."

The Reverend Mr. McCook sighed. It was evident that he regarded the Reverend Frank Higgins as too easily satisfied—an inconclusive preacher. But down the state, poor Mrs. Wilson and the children thought of Higgins as a big brother. And if you were to ask old man Wilson, he would tell you: "Higgins is a dead sure fine minister —the best ever, by God!"

When the Reverend Frank Higgins began his work among the forest Ishmaelites, no religious society had entered the camps with the gospel of Hope. The Catholic Church, then, as now, provided hospitals for the sick and injured campmen; but the spiritual possibilities of the lumberjacks received little consideration and far less attention. To-day the Presbyterian Church alone has organized missions among the lumber camps of the United States. To tell the story of the log-

ging camp mission and leave Frank Higgins out of that story would be preposterous. Higgins first saw the promise of the field. It was he who responded. It was he who in fact strove for possession. With him the mission began; and under him it has progressed, in spite of discouragements and for many years a scandalously inadequate support. The title the campmen have conferred on him is one of affection. It means much to them. It means much to Higgins. They call him "The Lumberjacks' Sky Pilot." And if you could hear his forest parishioners speak the name you would realize that his ordination is threefold: it is of God, surely; it is by the presbytery and by the lumberjacks. He is a big Irish Canadian—a great, big, warm, eloquent fellow, full of love and power and devotion. The pines are his parish. He found his own parish: and he suffices it. He has transformed the life of the pineries. Much of what follows used to be; and it has ceased to be—the worst of it—solely because of Higgins, whose labour has as much to do with the life of the logger as the latest mechanical invention. Consequently nothing can now truly be written of the logging of these parts which does not take his tremendous and inspiringly devoted service into account.

But this is not a biography of Frank Higgins. That must be written later—when the magnitude of his influence upon the life he touches can be gauged if he but justifies the promise and the possibilities of it, as he surely will. And when the story of his achievement is written, it will be a big story —big in manhood and unselfishness and success in labour even as the world understands success.

II

THE LUMBERJACKS

OUT of the ramshackle coaches of the logging train, as from a released stream, poured a horde of mackinawed men—big, roaring, lusty fellows. They were clear-eyed, like the northern sun; they were supple like the wind-resisting pines. Isolation marked their weather-scarred faces, the swing of the trackless freedom dominated the lithe bodies and the full volumed voices told of the wilderness where men fear neither eavesdroppers nor the enlargements of calumny.

"Hello, Peavey!" cried a saloon "toot," as he rushed forward, grasping heartily the hand of the leader. "Down river again? Back to God's country, where a man can have what he wants!"

Genial, affable, ingratiating, was the runner for the saloons. He was well dressed; he was as clean as water could make him, and his hand had a brotherly warmth that spoke the welcome shining in his face. In contrast, the lumberjacks needed the atten-

tion of tailor and barber, not to mention the transforming virtues of soap and water. They were returning from the Northern lumber camps where they had spent the winter in the arduous task of felling the forest. The privations of the past months were now forgotten. Civilization's horn of plenty invited indulgence. The unattainable in the forest could here be procured; and the jacks had the mighty wherewithal. Like the sands of the desert, long unkissed by the slacking rain, they thirsted—with a thirst that had grown because compelled to virtue through absence of vice.

Now for the deluge!

"Bring the bunch over!" continued the runner, as he mixed unreservedly with the soiled and torn woodsmen. "Good Gawd, be sociable! Glad to see you again! A devil of a winter you've had! Snow deep! You were in the Scullway Camps, eh? Scullway is a damned rascal to work for. . . . What? A fine fellow? Oh, sure! You're right! I was thinking of another Scullway — a red-headed chap with full beard. My mistake. Well, ha, ha!—the drinks are on me." He was affable to a degree worthy of a better cause.

"Hit the trail for the irrigating ditch,"

called out Peavey. "Hurry up, boys, or this dry bunch'll sure burn 'fore the corks are pulled."

The agent gladly led the crew to a rough, boarded building, on which a fantastic sign proclaimed to all who came and went that this was "Spider's Place."

Into the web the flies noisily crowded.

As I read the sign a line from an old book came to mind: "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." Evidently this ornithological proverb had no anthropological application.

I was waiting for a train, impatient over the delay, when this scene introduced me to the lumberjacks of northern Minnesota. Prior to this I had known little of the woodsmen: now their physical manhood awakened my interest and the ease with which they were led into temptation appealed for a remedy. I turned from the view of "Spider's Place," where the picturesque division of the forest army was opening its furlough, and saw that one of the woodsmen had not followed his companions.

"Not as dry as the rest of the boys?" I remarked to him.

"No," he replied. "I've got a homestead

up in Itasca. I can't afford to blow my stake. I need it for improvements."

"Can the others afford to blow theirs?"

"See here, pardner," he said, kindly, and with conviction; "you don't know these fellows, so don't blame them."

I admitted that their way of life was new to me.

"We've been in the timber all winter, workin' hard. The shanties we've lived in you wouldn't be willin' to keep a dog in. We've had no comfort, no ease, like other human beings. And now we're back with money to buy what we want. But there isn't a place to welcome us except the saloons and such. Is there?"

I could think of none.

"*Is there?*" the jack insisted.

The rough-garbed philosopher looked for an answer. I felt strangely vacant of thought or theory. "I don't know. You see, I am a stranger here," I ventured, in explanation.

"But you know it's true, anyway. The boys are human, and they go where they're welcome."

"You are evidently different from your companions," I suggested.

"Maybe. My mother tried to make a man

of me. . . . She's dead now. . . . And I'm tryin' to help her job along. That's one of the reasons why I don't drink."

Again a line from an old book came to mind: "Being dead, yet speaketh."

My train finally arrived and I hastened away. A closer acquaintance, later gained, enables me to see the hideous picture presented that night in "Spider's Place": the drinking, lusting, fighting, gambling, with the mad accompaniment of laughter and curses, the wild brutality of the veteran sinners and the forced hilarity of young, faltering prodigals. The image of God was sunk to the level of the low brute. Possibly the angels wept at the sight. But Spider and his ilk laughed as they counted the coin and opened another bottle to toast a successful day.

Stately and green is the forest of the North Star State. It extends from the Big-Sea Water of Lake Superior to the fertile silt of the Red River Valley. Two hundred miles is the width; two hundred miles or more is the length. Masts of spruce, straight and lance-like, raise their giant arms through the shroud of snow. Dark faced pines silhouette the distant stretches; the green capped Norways

form a bed for the azure sky, while here and there a solitary oak puts forth its powerful arms and presses back the intruding forest.

This is the Minnesota pinery, green in the days of June, green in the blasts of December —evergreen since the morn of creation when God gave it the colour of rest. Dreamland! Fairy-land! The place where wishes crystallize and the spirit of the dumb man sings to the orchestral accompaniment of the wind in the branching pine. But iron, riven from other hills, destroys this Eden, and the glistening ax introduces the tragedy of the trees and the still deeper tragedy of the lumberjacks. Hundreds of camps mar the beautiful region with their rude shacks and temporary shelters, their hideousness being intensified, if that be possible, by the surrounding battlements of shimmering green. In the Minnesota forests approximately twenty thousand men are employed in despoiling the solitudes—twenty thousand strong, powerful fellows hardened by toil, toughened by the fierce breath of cruel winter, daring, fearless, physically fit for the mightiest tasks of an empire: twenty thousand men isolated, lonely, untouched by the aids and restraints of civilization, housed in rough bunk-shacks, far from home, without religion and without God.

They are there to remove the growth of ages so that the farms and cities may have protection and comfort. The primeval forest has been invaded: this is the day of its defeat. The zero air resounds with the ring of the biting ax, the harsh tearing of saws, the strange, lurid oaths of the teamsters and the sullen sound of falling trees. The lumberjacks are the nomads of the West—farm-hands and railroad constructionists in summer, woodsmen in winter, tieless to place or kind, homeless and taxless. A few years ago Michigan claimed them for her own, later their habitat was the forest of Wisconsin: now their rendezvous is the green wood of Minnesota. In all the country there is scarcely a more interesting group of men—interesting because prodigal and wayward in life and habit, while their pine-sheltered home appeals to every leaf-loving soul.

The typical lumberjack is a man of large heart and of little will to resist the temptation to enjoyment of any sort. He has lost the power to check his evil desires—and then, you see, it is so easy to yield to the vultures who make sin convenient and righteousness hard. The saloon is alluringly near; the church and bethel are slow to approach. The harpies of vice wait at the wayside and

the sirens sing a soothing invitation to every passing traveller. One of my first woods acquaintances was old man Bradley. He was physically as tough as whalebone and as elastic as a well-trained athlete, unmarried, without a care, and just closing his forty-ninth winter in the woods. His long, swinging stride, somewhat resembling the gait of the sailor, made it difficult for my civilized legs to keep pace with him as we walked towards the camp.

"So this is your forty-ninth winter in the camps!" I said, admiringly, as I looked at his well-knit body.

"My forty-ninth. I'm sixty-five years old; and I know loggin' from the stump as well as by steam hauler."

"What have you to show for all those years of hard work?"

He smilingly thrust his hands into his pockets and turned them wrong side out. "That's my pile."

We both looked at the lonely jack-knife—and I noticed that one blade was broken. "Is that all you have?"

"That's all." The smile was gone. "And I'd have traded that for a drink of whiskey many a time, only ——"

I waited.

"Wall," he explained, "my teeth are gettin' poor and I need this knife t' cut my tobacco."

The Bradleys are legion.

Into the heart of the wooded lands the railroads push their iron arms; and the villages follow the railroads. The saloons are the first places of business and the gambling dens accompany them. One new town had between forty and fifty saloons and twenty gambling dens; yet the place had a population of only fifteen hundred. Another village, beautifully situated at the junction of two rivers, had less than two hundred inhabitants. But six saloons—and all other purveyors of iniquity—did a thriving business. The patronage was from the camps; the foresters were the source of profit.

Sunday, the Christian's day of rest and gladness, is still in many places the harvest-day of iniquity. Released from toil, the men pour into the towns, where whiskey, wheel and women snatch their earnings, reduce them to insensibility, to emptiness, and, in some cases, to death. Like the withered leaves of autumn before the eddying wind, the wielders of ax and cant-hook fall and perish.

"One night to blow the stake!" Then regrets—for a moment; and then back to toil in the solitudes.

Jack is not always a willing victim; so the knock-out drops are secretly administered and his pockets emptied while he lies unconscious in the "snake room." Later, he may complain of such drastic measures; he may suggest mildly that "they did not give me a run for my money." But he is helpless against the entrenched enemies; he is told to "go up river," or he is hustled unfeelingly out of town.

"He's only a lumberjack; he works better when he's all in."

That is the wealth of sympathy the Ishmaelite receives.

Billy the Filer drew his wages and started happily for home. Swinging his legs from the rear of the tote wagon, and whistling a boyhood tune, he thought of the pleasure in store for him when he entered the old town. In imagination he saw the old home and greeted the old folks. Billy was rich, having spent none of his winter earnings. The tote road ended in the village street; and a saloon runner, waiting for such as Billy, invited him to warmth and shelter in a near-by saloon. Here Billy's splendid intentions disappeared in the flow of inflaming liquors.

"How long have you been in the woods this time, Billy?" asked the runner.

"The whole season; and the stuff's all here." Billy drunkenly patted his pocket where his precious wages were tucked away. "Give me another hot one. Make it strong."

The runner winked at the bartender; and while the drink-mixer added the knock-out drops, he engaged the lumberjack in conversation. In a few minutes, very naturally, Billy was unconscious. They dragged him into the rear room, removed his money and left him to sleep off the effects of the drug while they watched for other victims. Billy was "dead broke." He went back to the camps to dream of the old town, the old home, the old folks—and to hope for better luck next time.

No place welcomes the lumberjack except the one he should avoid. The churches in the lumber districts are too weak to meet the large demands. There are no bethels except in the large cities. Reading rooms and the Y. M. C. A. are few. Jack is without a place of refuge behind whose doors he can find companionship and safety. Because of his weakness, because the balm of sympathy comes to him limitedly, the lumberjack is a

prey for the strong. He condenses all to a dark philosophy in which the dawn of hope is long delayed: civilization is a place of unbridled license where the law favours the spoiler; humanity is as cold as the frozen streams of his winter retreat; the church has forgotten, or never cared for, the prodigal, while it pampers the souls of its members; Christ is only a word of convenient profanity and God is dead. In his wretchedness, he labours for the keepers of the gates of death and is satisfied if by the sweat of his brow he can win an hour of forgetfulness in the riot of appetites and the wild hilarity of the forbidden.

And this is Truth. It is no sentimental religiosity, but cold and terrible Fact.

Even in a dark picture, however, there must be light. In the neglected sons of the lumber camps the hopeful ray is plainly seen: for the hearts of the jacks are as rich in charity as their lives are impoverished with sin. Their sympathies are easily touched and their liberality shames many a cleaner man. It is through the open freedom of their generous natures that the reformation, long delayed, must find its port of entrance. The remedy to work the change is the cleansing, will-hardening gospel of the

Man of Nazareth. When they shall learn to know Him, the friend of publicans and sinners, the foresters will bring forth the fruits of righteousness—virtue, temperance, godliness, against which there is no law.

The harvest is beginning: Frank Higgins, the Sky Pilot, and his associates are among the lumberjacks.

III

A NEW PARISH IS OPENED

AS I have said before, nothing can be written of the Minnesota pineries that does not include Frank Higgins. He goes everywhere; he touches everybody—not wholly in the slang sense of the word: because in the way of gaining contributions for his work he has been all his life a poor tool. When it comes to giving money for value received in the improvement of a soul, or for some temporary alleviation of distress, whether sin has caused the misery or not, he is a prodigal prince; but when it comes to asking for a dollar to help his goodness along he looks and bears himself for all the world like an amateur thief. However, his influence has been everywhere: and in these days—after a fight of seventeen years—his influence is everywhere admitted. In the beginning it was not admitted: Higgins was ridiculed and cursed: but he is neither laughed at nor anathematized any longer: he is respected. In short, he has "made good."

From Canada Higgins went to Barnum, Minnesota, as a lay preacher. He did not know why.

"I could not understand," said he, years afterwards, "why I should go to Barnum. Had I been permitted, I should have chosen a farming community, rather than a logging village. There seemed no chance to advance; and I had an eye on big churches, in those days. Now I look back and see a kindly providence leading. I am glad I went there; for Martin Cain, a logging contractor, attended my church, and his interest in lumbering introduced me to the camps and my future work."

Shortly after his arrival at Barnum, Higgins went with several friends across country to Kettle River, where the men, who, in the parlance of the camps, are called river pigs, were at work. It was spring. The ice-locked lakes and rivers felt its call, and the logs that had covered the ice were floating with the current on their southward journey. The men were helping the rear of the drive over the shallows—"sackin'," they called it—and in their labours they leaped from log to log, with the graceful agility of squirrels, or rode the clumsy timbers where they would. It seemed an easy thing to do; but none

save a master can keep his place on the unsteady rolling steeds.

In a bend of the stream was tied the floating wannigan, with its burden of camp equipment, bunks, cooking utensils and provisions; and near it, on the grassy shore, were the tents and camp-fire. After supper, just as the sun was tossing back its lingering kisses to the sleepy forest and wakeful river, the "river pigs" asked the preacher for a sermon. It was a surprising request, coming from a strange source.

"The last crowd on the face of the earth from which to expect such a demand," Higgins said, in telling about it. "I had heard their fluent profanity, and when they asked for the Gospel, I thought it was a joke. But they meant it."

The request was in harmony with the hour. Evening's solemn hush breathed on tree and stream. The ceaseless babble of the river came in whispers. Man desired to join in the Creator's praise; and where is there better sanctuary than the cloistered halls of the greenwood on the banks of a crystal stream? Taking a log for a platform, unaided by Bible or hymn-book, Higgins began his first service to the foresters. "Nearer My God to Thee" rolled through the ever-

greens as the men of the pickpole joined heartily in the hymn. "Jesus Lover of My Soul" touched their heart chords and mellowed their rough voices; the sunset smiled its approbation, and the silent forest bowed to the reverent strains. Over the running river the stately pines caught up the music and softly echoed back its closing prayer, "Oh, receive my soul at last."

With what supreme interest the men around the camp-fire listened to the old, old story of Jesus, the Lover of Wanderers! The shadows fell and broadened on the darkening earth while the preacher spoke of the world's great Light; and the strange audience, wrapped in thought, saw life's possibilities in Him. Recollections of the home-tree came back. The sweet lullaby of mother stole into minds long forgetful. At the spring of boyhood they drank again and the councils of youth came to the men in the playing shadows of the dying fire. The benediction fell upon the group like a voice from another world, and in her echoed "Amen!" nature breathed a prayer.

On the morrow, when the visitor departed, the river pigs expressed their pleasure in the service.

"We're way off here in the timber and

the church don't often come our way, but it's welcome."

"If some preacher would drop in, he could give us a lift. The Lord knows we need it," laughed another to hide his earnestness.

"What's the matter with you doin' a turn?" they asked.

In response to the invitation, Frank Higgins often went to the drive on Kettle River. An appreciative audience always awaited him.

Prior to this, Higgins had never been on the drive. The work was new and strange to him; but he joined the river pigs and added to their merriment by his unskillful attempts at log-riding. When the preacher mounted the floating timbers every driver expectantly looked out of the tail of his eye, joyfully awaiting the hastening moment when "his Reverence" would descend into the depths. But a laugh could not deter a man like Higgins. If these men were to be his hearers he must be able to appreciate their labours. Real appreciation comes with experience, and Higgins had many drenchings before it arrived. Men whose tasks demand muscular strength and skill admire the physically able. The lumberjacks and river-

men despise the weak and fearful and support him who refuses to acknowledge defeat. Physical prowess wins where mental powers fail to get a hearing; but the combination of both, backed by a strong desire to serve, is sure of recognition.

"When you are in Barnum I want you to remember me," said the preacher to the drivers; "my house and church are open to you. You are just as welcome as the people in the village."

The boys remembered the invitation; and a few Sundays later three big rivermen entered the church and took seats in the rear. They were dressed in their working clothes—shirts resplendent in fighting colours, broad belts, and heavy, spike-soled boots. Their presence created no small sensation. Barnum was accustomed to the lumberjacks and river pigs but it had never seen them in the church.

Before beginning his service Higgins went to the men and gave them hearty greeting.

"We thought we'd drop in and see if you'd welcome us to the gospel shop. You said you would," volunteered the spokesman. "And I guess he has, bunkies," he added, turning to his friends.

After that they came to the little church

whenever they spent Sunday in town. With the trio came others, knowing that they would be hospitably received. This proved to the preacher that the man who wishes a larger field has only to remove the fence that encloses his present one. As often as his pressing duties allowed, the missionary followed his new found flock on the river. From the memories of the men who heard and of him who preached the pleasure of those sunset gatherings will never be effaced. Kettle River drive brought forth a larger harvest than preacher or river pig dreamed.

In the fall of 1895 a delegation of lumberjacks called on Higgins and asked to be included in the circle of his ministrations.

"We need you just as much as that crew of drivers you preached to in the spring," they said. And they looked the part they professed.

Camp after camp petitioned. The work grew until all those around the village were receiving occasional services from the unordained man who preached in the Presbyterian mission. The field was large, white for a willing harvest, but the labourers were few—only one.

Late one night two lumberjacks came to

Higgins' home. "We want you quick," they said. "We've brought Will Lee from the camp to his homestead. He's askin' for you. He's a mighty sick man."

In company with the lumberjacks, Mr. Higgins went through the forest to the log cabin of the homesteader. The doctor met him at the door.

"If we could get Lee to St. Luke's hospital in Duluth," said he, "there might be a chance for him. He cannot obtain the necessary care in this shack."

"I'll get him through," said Higgins.

They bundled the patient snugly into a sleigh, took him to the train and were soon at the hospital.

After a careful examination the physician said: "There is no chance for your friend's recovery. He is beyond our help. You had better break the news to him."

Gently the rough camp preacher told the dying man and asked him to make preparation for the nearing end. The lumberjack looked into the eyes of the weeping minister and smilingly said: "Thank God you came to the camp—that night. I heard you preach of the Saviour. I wanted to know Him. It was the first time in twenty years that I had heard the Gospel. . . . I was raised in a

good home, and that night the Christian teaching came back to me. . . . When the lanterns were put out and the bunk house was still, I got on my knees and prayed God to forgive the past . . . and make me a better man. . . . Jesus Christ brought His strong salvation to me. I was forgiven."

He paused through weakness. The death cloud was in his eyes.

"Mr. Higgins, go back to the camps . . . and tell the boys the story of Jesus Christ. . . . Go back and tell them the old story. . . . They need you worse than the towns do. . . . Tell them that Jesus can make them live. . . . Go back to the camps."

He ceased to speak. More feebly came the shortening breath. It fluttered; and the spirit returned to the God who gave it. That night all Higgins' plans changed, and ambitions, such as come to young men, were swept away. That night the large pulpits of which he had dreamed were superseded by the log or barrel of the bunk house and the future audiences were rough clothed, rough visaged men who worshipped in crude forest shacks. That night Higgins consecrated himself to the service of God and man in the logging camps.

The extent of the field was bewildering; the intensity of the need appalling. There were Christian men in the camps, and many others whose lives were moral; but compared with those who wasted their substance in riotous living they were as a grain of wheat in a measure of chaff. The mass were "burning the candle at both ends with the devil setting it off in the middle." Their vicious hilarity knew no limit, their license no restraint. Free in the forest, they were not bound by convention in the towns. They needed human and divine assistance, and Higgins prayed for power to give both.

Once in his endeavour to reach other camps he forgot that Sunday was near and pushed farther into the woods. The village congregation assembled, but no preacher appeared to assist them in their devotions. When Higgins returned early in the next week many inquired the cause of his absence.

"Didn't you have service?" he asked.

"There was no one to lead us," they explained.

"Aren't there any Christians here who can fill in occasionally?" asked the preacher. "Can't professing Christians praise God unless they have a poor chap like me to direct

them? There's evidently not much danger of the world being evangelized from this point."

The spring following his decision to devote himself exclusively to the campmen, Higgins was surprised on returning from the woods to find his home filled with lumberjacks. "Mr. Higgins," began the spokesman, "we've dropped in to tell you we've enjoyed your preachin'. The boys want me to make a spiel, but the saw's my line. You've treated us white; you have given us more advice than we've followed, and you've never asked to see the colour of our money. This is no one sided affair. We're no cheap skates. The boys have chipped in and here's your stake for services rendered."

He handed the minister a check for fifty-one dollars. Higgins had never asked the men for financial assistance. They at first thought that he was preaching "for what was in it." But the absence of appeal showed them that love for their good was the impelling cause; so they gladly gave in return. How to finance the new missionary field had been a problem. Higgins was willing to work; but living and travelling expenses must be forthcoming. The benevolent Boards of the church could not take on the new and

untried work. Their hands were full; and these unsettled communities promised no permanency. Now, through the benevolence of the woodsmen, Higgins saw a new possibility: the men in the camps would pay a goodly part if the mission were properly organized.

The door was opening—he could see beyond the portals.

IV

THE HEART OF THE LOGGING DISTRICT

IN the spring of 1899 Frank Higgins took charge of the Presbyterian church at Bemidji, the heart of the Minnesota logging district, where thousands of lumberjacks rendezvoused and spent their earnings. He had learned the conditions of the woodsmen through the Barnum experience: he needed the intimacy of Bemidji to show him their real soul poverty. Here they were at their worst—a prey to every spoiler and evil designer. Bemidji is beautifully located. Lake Bemidji and Lake Irvine are inviting sheets of water with a shore line of nearly fifty miles. The Mississippi joins their crystal bodies; and at the point of meeting is the little city of Bemidji. Those who plotted the town removed only the larger trees; the homes of men rest in a shelter of constant green. Like a huge emerald in a setting of silver is the green crowned city with its lakes and flowing river.

Nature contributed lavishly; but man brought with him the defects of humanity, and painted the fair location with the blackness of unlicensed vice, filling an Eden of beauty with the blight of Sodom. It was a "wide open" town in which saloons abounded, gamblers worked unmolested and all sorts of sin flourished. Known as the most shameless town in the state in those days, it seemingly lived up to its reputation. The police force was little more than a name. The saloon men were the powers. A convenient double blind veiled the face of justice. Law was roped and thrown. Rum was the real owner of the town. Gambling prospered in most of the saloons, its numerous devices openly attracting the indifferent. Not satisfied with what came to them, the runners of the saloons and dens went into the camps to drum up trade for their respective places of business—creating a sentiment that would induce "the boys" to visit the dens of vice. Bemidji did not savour of decency in those days; it had not heard the word. It was young, wild and aboveboard. Everything was primitive; the red light district was as conspicuous as the bank, both being considered necessities. Physical and unrestrained, lusty in its desires, it did not concern itself

with moral distinctions or the niceties of ethics.

The opening of a saloon or gambling den was accomplished with all the flourishes. The town officials attended; the band was there, of course, and the majesty of the law was recognized by throwing the key of the saloon into the street with the announcement that the door would never be closed. Thus was the state enactment, requiring saloons to close at eleven o'clock at night, made the butt of license. Men and women were invited to the opening: even Mrs. Higgins received an invitation. As a citizen remarked: "You can't put enough black in the picture when you try to paint it." But I am describing the past, not the present: for since that day the place has changed for the better. Its past still influences it; but a brighter day is in the dawning. To do justice to the moral element of the town it must be added that there were always those who strove for better conditions. Their efforts have met with some success: for Bemidji in 1912 is vastly superior, and speaks of its past with shame.

Frank Higgins found the Presbyterian church in a state of coma, promising an early death. Only two members remained; and

the unfinished edifice spoke eloquently of financial difficulties and lack of interest. Higgins had no desire to act as undertaker to a departed church: and so he set himself to resurrect the scattered adherents and to complete the building. There being no suitable place of residence for his family, the unfinished church became meeting house and manse combined. The minister who preceded Higgins had scored a failure. Discouragement and opposition had finally driven him from the place. The vicious element were sure they could repeat the act with the new man; but unfortunately for them, Frank Higgins throve on opposition and was unacquainted with discouragement.

Shortly after his arrival, the new preacher was standing on the corner of the main street when a flashily dressed fellow, whose clothes loudly announced the gambler, accosted him.

"Who're you?" demanded the diamond-studded stranger.

"I'm the new minister of the Presbyterian church."

"Well, you won't last long here," the stranger sneeringly retorted. "We drove out the other chap. You'll have to go. When doctors hit a town, folks die; when

ministers come, folks go to hell. But we'll clean you out of here pretty damned quick."

"Well, I guess it's my play," drawled Higgins; "and here's where I give notice that *I stay and call your bluff!*"

The closed fist of Higgins quickly followed his words. It landed with startling heaviness near the inviting diamond stud of the gambler, who tumbled into the gutter and frantically waved his feet in the air while a howl of fright came from his lips. The crowd laughed as it watched the gambler arise from the clinging mud. The town marshal hurried forward.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked the preacher.

"Nothing the matter with me," Higgins replied, unperturbed. "There seems to be something the matter with the fellow down there. *I'm* all right."

That night the lawless element decided that it had made a mistake in driving the other preacher out of town. "*He* was only a preacher; but this fellow is a preacher with a mighty heavy fist—and the Lord only knows what he has up his sleeve!"

Higgins cheerfully threw himself into the life of the new town. It needed reforming; and he wished to hasten the day. Every

election became an opportunity for protesting against the lawless conditions. After a civic campaign in which the "wide open" policy had again been successful, the jubilant victors were celebrating with open house and free whiskey when the suggestion was made that it would spice the occasion if a keg of beer were discovered in the Presbyterian church. Mr. Higgins was living in the church; and, upon returning home late in the evening, found the keg that the conspirators had left. The humour of the incident appealed to the minister; and he acted accordingly. The conspirators had in the meantime quietly informed some of the members of the congregation that the pastor had a keg of beer hidden away in the church. Early next morning the trouble hunters, in the absence of the minister, searched the premises.

"Beer?" said Higgins. "Oh, yes! Some friend left a keg here. I sold it and sent the money to the Board of Home Missions."

It was a hard fight. But Higgins won—won after his appeal to the city and county governments, and even the state officials, had failed. The issue was presented from the pulpits and in private conversation.

The women organized a W. C. T. U. and carried on the fight over the back fences and at their regular meetings.

The years at Bemidji crowded themselves with work and success. The unfinished edifice received completion during the first year; during the next a cozy manse was built, while the membership and congregations steadily increased; in the third year the outstation at Farley erected a church and the growing congregation at Bemidji found it necessary to build a more commodious church before the fourth year ended. Throughout his entire pastorate Higgins was in the throes of building operations.

The camp work, however, was not neglected. "Those boys out there in the woods," he said, "got on my nerves. I wanted to do something to show them that somebody cared for their souls. In one of the camps a poor fellow had his skull crushed by a dead limb falling from the tops. I was in there at the time. We nailed a few pine boards together, and outside of the camp we buried the man. As I stood beside that lonely grave, my heart cried out, 'Oh, God, what can I do to help these poor fellows to live right? If you can use Frank Higgins more, just show him how!' I was never

much at writing. But I wrote an article for a religious paper, telling, as best I knew how, something about the immorality and needs of the men, and to my surprise, a woman, God bless her! sent me a check for two hundred dollars. I felt so good over it that I hired two men to go into the camps and preach and trusted in God for the rest of the money to pay their salary; and He saw that I got it."

In addition to his church duties, Higgins every winter gave personal attention to nine camps and regularly visited three each week. The seven addresses weekly, the miles of walking, the pastoral calls and the cares of building filled his hours to the brim. One morning, on returning from the camps, he was informed by Mrs. Higgins of an urgent call from the Sisters' Hospital. He went at once to the ward and found Will McDonald, a Highland Scotchman, at the point of death. McDonald had met with a fatal accident in the camps. Though reared in a quiet Christian home among the bonny hills of Scotland, amidst the rough life of the Minnesota camps he had forgotten his early instruction and had travelled the easy ways of temptation.

The preacher tried to cheer the dying

man, but the woodsman turned to him and said:

"It's no use, Frank. The jig is up. I've got to go. I'm nearing the landing with a heavy load. The road is steep. Do you think I'll make the grade?"

McDonald was a four horse teamster, and was thinking of the unknown road and the possibilities of this first and last journey over it.

"Yes, Will; you can make the grade, but you'll have to look for help."

"You mean I'll have to call for another team of leaders to help me up?"

"That is it!" said Higgins. "But thank God, McDonald, you have the greatest Leader to give you a lift—the Lord Jesus Christ. Every man He has helped has made the grade. Listen, Will!"

Taking out his pocket Testament, the preacher read of the prodigal, and of how, by God's help, he had made the grade. Then came the strengthening text setting forth God's love for a lost world and the needlessness of perishing. "Turn to Him, Will, and the grade will be easy." The missionary prayed, asking that poor broken Will McDonald might make the grade and arrive at the heavenly landing. In the ward the

other lumberjacks heard the prayer, and while tears coursed their bronzed faces, they, too, uttered silent petitions, crude but genuine, that their fellow campman might reach the hilltop. A few hours later Mr. Higgins again called at the hospital. The screen was around the bed. Near by sat the Sister of Charity with book and beads. The minister knelt at the Scotchman's side and the dying man's face lit with a smile when he recognized his visitor.

"You're right, Frank. Jesus Christ is a great Leader. I couldn't have made the grade without Him. . . . I needed His help. . . . I'm going up the grade easily. . . . We're going to make it sure." McDonald was sinking rapidly. The missionary bent close to catch his words. "Tell the boys I've made the grade," he whispered—and with a smile was gone.

Higgins likes to speak of himself as a "rough man." And perhaps, indeed, he lacks the graces of what is called the "pink-tea parson." There was some objection to his ordination by the Presbytery of Duluth; but in the end he received the ordination he coveted—and which "the boys" demanded in his behalf. Subsequently he took what

he calls a "post-graduate course." And a curious course it was! The woodsmen of winter are farm-hands, railroad constructionists and wanderers in summer; and Mr. Higgins wished to acquaint himself with the summer life of his future parishioners. Donning the clothes of a labouring man, he mounted a freight train and began a long Western trip of quiet investigation. In western North Dakota he laboured for several days as a harvest hand, meeting many of the men he had known in the Minnesota woods. He next shipped with a gang of scrapermen for construction work on a new railway in Montana. Shortly afterwards he joined a pick and shovel gang at the Dalles in Oregon, and finally went as a deck hand on a Columbia River boat, landing at Portland, where he ended his journey. In all parts of his hobo trip he found the winter woodsmen, some labouring, some leisurely passing the warm and sunny days in idleness. As a working man he entered the larger churches to see the reception they would tender the wanderer. He camped with the "down-and-outs," ate with the "panhandlers," roomed at cheap lodging houses, or slept on the hard floors of the "side-door-pullmans." He saw the life as one who lived and experienced it,

felt the pangs of hunger, encountered the slights and rejections, the hardships and lovelessness to which their lives were subjected, and out of the knowledge came a broader sympathy, a more ready ability to help. When he returned to Bemidji the new church was ready for dedication and after a few weeks he left the pastorate to give himself wholly to the twenty thousand men of Minnesota's camps. On the day he resigned from the church he thus announced his intention to be a pastor to the woodsmen: "I belong to them now, and the vices that mar my brothers of the camps will find me actively opposing them. The fight of the men is mine. Untrammelled I go to assist them. May God give me and the boys His help!"

His field was waiting. He now became in reality "The Lumberjacks' Sky Pilot."

V

"NOW WE'RE LOGGIN'"

WHEN a lumber company contemplates logging, cruisers are sent through its lands to estimate the timber. A crew of experienced woodsmen follow, who select sites for camps and lay out the logging roads. This latter is not an easy task, for the roads must be as nearly level as the possibilities of the land allow. A hill means reducing the size of the loads and a consequent increase in the cost of production. A grade scarcely noticeable to the eye adds danger. If there be a descent, it must be towards the landing: hence the need of skilled road makers. The logging roads are constructed in the early autumn. The "main stem," as the principal road is called, is from fifty to seventy-five feet in width and extends for miles, ending at a lake, river or railroad. Branches run out from this road to all parts of the forest and a "come-back" road sometimes parallels it. The "main stem," broad, level, often winding around the hills, sug-

gests a city boulevard and would do credit to the large municipalities.

When the cold, binding wind of the north has frozen the hills and glens and the oozy swamp lands become resistant to the tread, the unsightly rut-cutter is hauled over the newly made roads. This mechanism cuts two deep grooves, eight feet apart. These ruts are partly filled with water from the water tank and in the icy troughs thus formed the huge runners of the heavy logging sleds travel with ease and security.

The sleds are bulky affairs. On the heavy runners rest the sixteen to twenty feet bunks and the sled, with its chains, weighs about thirty-five hundred pounds—a good load in itself.

Logging from the stump has had its day. Now the haul is counted in miles, not in yards as formerly. Yesterday they used the hand spike in loading; to-day the steam jammer lifts the logs into place. Then oxen hauled the small loads of a thousand feet; now the steam-hauler drags its chains of trailing sleds and fifty to seventy-five thousand feet of lumber constitute a single load. Horses are used for hauling in most of the camps, as the steam-hauler is a new and expensive machine. Where the roads are in

NOW THE STEAM-HAULER DRAGS ITS CHAINS OF TRAILING SLEDS.

good condition the amount drawn by two or four horses is almost unbelievable. A load of logs containing thirty-six thousand six hundred board feet was hauled two miles by four horses at Grindstone Lake, Minnesota. It was twenty-one feet wide, twenty-six feet high, and the logs numbered one hundred and fifty-three. Another load was taken from a camp near Shell Lake, Wisconsin, that contained thirty-one thousand four hundred and eighty feet of lumber. A thousand feet in the green log, with its attendant slabs and bark, weighs nearly eight thousand pounds. The above figures will give some idea of the splendid horse-flesh in the pineries and also show the perfection to which the road making is carried. The ordinary load is from six to twelve thousand feet.

The camp is generally situated near the centre of the land or on an elevation convenient to water. The buildings consist of cook-shack, made large enough for dining purposes, bunk houses for the men, carpenter and blacksmith shops, filer's shack, barns and office—a little village in itself. All these buildings are constructed of logs chinked with clay and are quite warm.

The interior of the cook-shack is interesting. Visitors are apt to journey first in that

direction, not because of appetite, but to satisfy their curiosity and to "see the animals feed." At one end of the room stand the large stoves, sending out their heat and odours. The walls near them resemble the interior of a country store with its medley of cans and packages. The rest of the space is reserved for the dining tables, where dishes of tin (though a few camps have introduced enamelware), substantial iron knives and forks and unsubstantial tin spoons suggest a tin shop. Bottles that once held patent medicine or whiskey stand here and there among the tin dishes and the visitor is uncertain as to the sociability of the place or its unhealthfulness until the better informed assure him that the contents are catsup or vinegar.

The interior decorations are not conducive to good appetite. "We use oleomargarine all the time" has a conspicuous place—and the writer has never doubted that "oleo," or a dissembling substitute, was used in every camp he visited. "No talking at the tables" also glares at the diners. This is probably a wise precaution: for it saves time, keeps the men from quarrelling, and, in case the food is below standard, the grumbler is silent until after he has left the table.

HE WHO LABORS IN THE PINE-LADEN AIR DOES NOT QUARREL WITH SERVICE IF THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY BE RIGHT.

The food is generally very good, strong, substantial, abundant and of sufficient variety. The fastidious would hardly care for the slap-dash service; but the lumberjacks are not fastidious. He who labours in the pine-laden air does not quarrel with the service if the quality and quantity be right. Beef, pork, potatoes, beans, peas and dried fruits form the bill of fare.

The bunk houses are large and roomy. On the long sides of the building double-decked bunks are constructed. If their ends are towards the centre of the room they are called "muzzle-loaders," and where the sides are parallel with the walls they received the palatial name of "Pullmans." Some of them are none too clean. In the centre of the floor stands the large cylindrical wood-stove. Above it hangs the drying rack. Every lumberjack wears several pairs of socks to keep out the cold and in the evening he places them on the rack to dry. Water and tin basins are convenient for those who are acquainted with the sanitary custom of bathing.

The clerk, bosses, scalers and others of more pretentious occupation sleep in the office, one corner of which is set apart for the wannigan—the camp store. Here the men

buy clothing, shoes, tobacco and other staples. The stock is not extensive, but the high price of living has reached the woods, and twenty-five cent socks are sold at fifty cents. One of the clerks said, "I have charge of the wannigan—the first graft on the lumberjack." A Pennsylvania Dutchman is credited with the remark: "I never do business for less than one per cent. I buy these things for six dollars a dozen and sell them for twelve." That Dutchman ought to be in the camps.

In the old days, before the influx of foreign labour, the native workers predominated and had a vernacular of their own, as the following shows.

A top loader had met with an accident. The Sister in the hospital asked him how it happened.

"Well, you savvy," said Jack, "the grounder bunched her an' the push, seein' a green guy comin' up the pike, hailed him. I told the guy to give 'er a St. Croix an' he give 'er a Sag an' gunned 'er. The muzzle hit my stem an' broke it."

Which, being freely translated, means:

"The man who worked on the ground at the loading station gave up his job and the boss, seeing a new man coming up the main

logging road, set him to work with me. I told the new man to hold back the log with his cant-hook, but he pushed it forward so that the log pointed upward like a gun and the upper end hit my leg and broke it."

Where there are several camps owned by the same company, the important personage is the "walking boss"—the superintendent of all the camps. "The push" is in charge of a single camp, and "the straw push" is the under boss. Cooks are "dough punchers" or "biscuit shooters," and if unskilled, "stomach robbers." Their assistants are "lunkies" or "cookees." The carpenter answers to the appellation of "wood-butcher," while the clerk is "the bloat that makes the stroke" or the "ink splasher." The man who keeps the ice roads free from refuse is "the road monkey" and the workman who tends the bunk-house fires is "the shanty boss" or "the bull cook," because, in the old days, when oxen were used, it was also his duty to see to their comfort. The top-loader is a "sky-hooker" and the missionary is "the sky pilot." Skidders, teamsters, sawyers, swampers and others make up the camp crew.

Wages range from twenty-six dollars a month for the swampers to sixty dollars and

upwards for the cook. The cook is the highest paid man with the exception of the boss, who generally receives from seventy-five to one hundred dollars a month. Board is provided for all the men in addition to their wages. "In the works," where the trees are felled, the men labour in crews. The sawyers fell the timber; the swampers trim the trunk of its branches and make openings through which the logs are drawn to the skidways.

That logging will be a principal industry in Minnesota for the next twelve years is the belief of the well-informed. The timber is disappearing at the rate of two billion board feet a year and the camps and mills of the state employ almost forty thousand men. Where once the timid deer cropped the tender herbage the rough camps of the foresters lift their ugly sides and before the keen blades of the campmen the solitudes are passing.

VI

THE JACKS IN THEIR FOREST HOME

INTO the camps crowd the lumberjacks with the coming of winter. "Why is it that they are willing to go into isolation and hardship?" you ask. We can only answer, "Why do the sailors go down to the sea in ships?" Douglas Malloch, the lumberman's poet, says in "The Calling of the Pines"

"When I listen to the callin' of the pine,
When I drink the brimmin' cup of forest wine—
Then the path of life is sweet to my travel-weary feet
When I listen to the callin' of the pine."

Many have followed the camps from boyhood. I met one man who had spent fifty winters in the woods, and his brother almost as many. It had become second nature; the lure of the woods was irresistible.

In the towns and villages the lumberjacks are seen at their worst because civilization only welcomes them to its vices: in the camps they are seen at their best, the causes of their depravity being absent. These big,

hearty fellows may abound in vices, but they have their code of honour, and the man who departs from it will find it necessary to depart from the camp. Depraved, yet they command the respect of men who are acquainted with their better natures.

The old lumberjack will not tolerate the least word of slander against a good woman. If she is entitled to his respect she is entitled to his defense. He may be steeped in vice himself; but he esteems clean lives, and a good woman appeals to his chivalry. She is as safe in the camps as in her own home, her purity being her protection. The Sisters of Charity go from camp to camp soliciting for hospitals and schools. They are often miles from any habitation and when night overtakes them they sleep in the camps. I have never heard of one of them being molested in these lonely trips. Among the rough, profane foresters they are as safe as behind the carefully locked doors of the convent. The lumberjack who would wrong one of them, or any good woman, would probably not leave the camp alive. On one occasion a camp foreman, with his wife, entered the caboose of a logging train. In the car the men were drinking. The bottle was passed around and all drank, the foreman included.

As it went the rounds it was offered to the foreman's wife; but scarcely had it been extended when the husband floored the donor and kicked him out.

In settling disputes, nature's weapons are the sole instruments used. The fist is the arbiter, although the boot is sometimes called into exercise. Fights due to personal animosity are to be expected where men are free from the restraints of civilization; and often the friendly boxing and wrestling, which help to pass many lonely hours, generate a battle in which hate is the ruling passion. In Camp 14 an ex-convict, for some unknown reason, made life miserable for an easy-going Irishman whose blood was more sluggish than that of the average son of Erin. At last the attacks were more than the peace-loving fellow could stand. (How doth the proverb read? "Beware of the wrath of the silent man"?) He went to his bunk, drew on his spiked boots and rushed to meet the ex-convict. With a blow of his fist he floored the tormentor, and, beside himself with rage, kicked him until his body was a mass of bruises. Had not the woodsmen interfered, he would doubtlessly have killed him. The wounded man was taken to the hospital, where he remained for sev-

eral weeks, and, on recovering, left for other parts, to the satisfaction of all.

Mason and Graham were not on amicable terms. A storm had been slowly brewing between the two teamsters, and on the night of Higgins' advent at Camp 1 they exchanged blasphemous descriptions so freely that every man in the bunk house knew that diplomatic relations had been completely severed and hostilities declared. The contestants were now looking for the advantage of position before beginning the fight. As a messenger of peace, the missionary felt that he must try to settle the difficulty before the men appealed to brute force. But the enmity was of long standing and the desire for each other's subjection too strong for either of them to listen to council, no matter how wise. In fact, the possibility of the fight being stopped aroused them to greater anger; and in the presence of the would-be peacemaker they flew at each other in the vicious hilarity of battle.

Higgins (the camp work was new to him then) rushed into the mêlée and grabbed Mason by the waist, believing, in his innocency, that "it takes two to make a quarrel." The missionary held his man in a vise-like

grip and the battle halted for a moment. Graham, however, turned suddenly from his opponent and gave Higgins a terrific blow, which sent him to the dirty floor.

"See here, Pilot," cried Graham, "butt in all you want to until the first blow is struck, then climb into the top bunk as fast as God will let you! That's the law in the camps."

It was good advice: Higgins took it. From a safe position he watched the contest through its bloody length, his aching jaw quickening his sympathy for the men as they bruised each other on the floor below.

"I hated to hit you, Pilot," said Graham afterwards; "but when a man and his wife want to find out who is boss they hate to have the neighbours interfere with their family plans."

"I begin to see," said Higgins, and his hand unconsciously sought his jaw.

Card playing is a favourite time-killer. Where the towns are inaccessible the woodsmen spend the evenings and the Sabbath with the greasy cardboards. Some of the proprietors forbid cards in the interest of peace. The missionary arrived at a camp where Saturday evening was always given over to gambling. The game had begun

and he feared he would not be allowed to hold service; for the foreman was a professional gambler who invariably succeeded at the weekly games.

"What are the chances of holding a service here to-night?" asked the preacher of the playing foreman.

"The luck's with you! When do you want to begin?"

"Right now," answered the surprised missionary, "if it is convenient."

"What say, boys?" asked the foreman. "I have a good hand and I propose that we turn this jackpot over to the preacher."

The pot held fourteen dollars, but the preacher tactfully refused it.

Since the missionaries began the distribution of magazines many of the workmen spend the spare moments in reading. The lumberjacks start to work by the light of the "loggers' sun" (torchlight), and it is dark when they return in the evening. The winter days are short in the north. At nine the "bull cook" puts out the bunk-house lights and the camp is soon asleep. This rule is common to all the camps and is seldom questioned. One night, however, a drunken lumberjack kept all his campmates awake

with his maudlin lamentations. "I want t' die! I'm goin' t' die! Gimme a razor!" he shouted; and in spite of the efforts to silence him he still shouted his desire. At midnight they sent for the "push," who, being a man for emergencies, took his rifle and entered the bunk house.

"You want to die?" cried the boss fiercely. "All right, I'll help you!" He cocked the empty gun and pointed it at the shouting man.

The tide turned quickly. The drunk pleaded for his life and begged on bended knee for the privilege of living, while the camp howled its delight. The foreman relented, lowered the gun, and silence reigned until the blast of the cookee's horn broke the morning stillness.

Everything about the lumberjack is picturesque, even his profanity. So habituated is he to swearing that even spiritual matters are discussed in language shockingly at contrast with the subject. A hymn-book fell into the hands of a lumberjack who read music. The fellow had a good voice and sang to his mates. "That's a damned fine song," said the singer, enthusiastically; "the show don't reach it—not by a h—l of a

sight!" He sang another. The sentiment of the hymn pleased him and called forth this commendation: "How the devil do they think of such fine things? It's the blankety blankest song I ever heard." There was no intentional irreverence—he spoke admiringly and used verbal gestures.

An old timer told the writer of an incident he had witnessed. They were loading with steam jammer; and the "sky-hooker" on the car was in a rage. One of the logs did not come up to suit him and he vented his wrath in profanity that startled even the lumberjacks. The explosion ended with a direct appeal to all the Persons of the Godhead—an unspeakable oath.

"I never heard anything like it," said the old timer; "it scared the whole loading crew. Less than ten minutes afterwards the hook broke and a log weighing tons crushed the hooker to pulp. I used to swear, but that day ended it."

If you wish to meet generous-hearted men, visit the logging camps. The typical jack is benevolent and responsive, glad to ameliorate suffering. Money has little value to him: it represents the price of a short-lived pleasure and he will sacrifice that pleasure to

THEY WERE LOADING WITH STEAM JAMMER.

help another. Beggars, cripples and charity workers know this and impose on his large heartedness. One notorious cripple has begged yearly for money to buy an artificial limb. He still walks with a crutch although the boys have contributed the price of a score of limbs.

The spirit of "the boys" was shown when the foreman's baby was baptized in the bunk house. After the ceremony Mr. Higgins presented a bundle of clothing sent by the interested women of a city church where he had mentioned the approaching baptism. In the presence of the campmen the parcel was opened; and when they saw its contents their wrath kindled.

The garments were second hand.

"We're no paupers," they cried. "What do they mean by insultin' our kid with such duds?"

The hat was passed. Every man cast in liberally—"so that our kid can hold up his head." These uncouth, uncultured prodigals resented the type of generosity that the wealthy church habitually extends to its refined, college-bred home missionaries. Many a poor fellow has found true charity among these rough-hewn men. The sick are not dependent on the community if their

fellows know of it; the dead lumberjack is not interred in the potter's field. Say what you will about the lumberjack, but put the grace of charity to his credit and let it cover a multitude of sins.

There is little sickness among the workers, despite the limited chance for personal cleanliness. If one bathes one must do so in the presence of the whole camp. It is difficult to secure clean garments and the horse blankets in the bunks have probably never seen soap and water since they left the mills. But the hours in the pure air, and the hard, active life counteract these disease-breeding conditions. The hospital cases are mostly due to nameless causes or to accidents. Felling large trees is never without hazard; the loading is still more dangerous, and "breaking the loads" stands at the head of the list. In the foregoing chapters there is no desire to convey the impression that all the campmen are sunken in vice. There are all kinds and conditions among them. Many of these men come from homes of refinement and ease, but through adversity have gone down to lower plains. Others have followed the woods from youth and are unfitted for any other labour, yet amidst surroundings that

tempt to viciousness they have kept their morals with scrupulous care.

Dick Jackson came from a farm in Iowa and saw no reason why his home habits should be changed, so in his first night in the camp he knelt by his bunk to pray. One of the men threw a boot at him which caused Dick abruptly to end his prayer and disappear in the bunk, much to the enjoyment of the watching crew. A teamster saw the incident and after soundly thrashing the boot-thrower dragged Dick from his bed and thrust him to his knees.

"Here, damn you, pray!" ordered the teamster roughly; "and as long as you stay in this blazing camp, you say your prayers. This hole needs them. Now get busy, and if you cut it out I'll warm your blank hide."

In another camp a lumberjack knelt to pray before retiring. He also met interruption in the form of a well-flung rubber. The praying man, being of physical as well as spiritual soundness, rose from his knees and beat the disturber into subjection, then returned to his prayers and finished them without further interruption.

The campmen are a neglected class. No one has touched them with the elevating

power of good. They are isolated from civilization and its good agencies; but the vices of the provinces pursued them because there was "money in it." The railroad men of a few years ago were near the level of the lumberjacks. The saving agency to them was the restraint of home and through the home the Gospel and its adjuncts. Christian people helped the railroaders with Young Men's Christian Associations and missions; the Church extended its hand, and under the stimulus the men arose to their proud position. But what has been done for the lumberjacks? Almost nothing. They work through the dreary, cruel winter in the far-away camps, and when they return in the spring only the hand of the depraved is extended in welcome: "Come and have a hot drink, boys; it's one on the house." . . .

VII

THE GOSPEL IN THE SHACKS

"THE groves were God's first temples," designed for devotion and prayer—so we poetically believe. I never pass through the Northern pineries, beholding the long fingers of cooling green pointing to the eternal blue, without feeling an exaltation of spirit, a desire to praise their Creator. Shrub and towering tree, the aisles of the wood, the sweet, soothing comfort of the silence all conduce to adoration and praise. No temple is more devotional than this whose dome is of sheltering leaves, whose columns are living, graceful trees. The modern lumberjacks, not being religiously inclined but, on the contrary, boisterous in blasphemy and willful in vice, see nothing conducive to devotion in the peaceful, green-capped solitudes. Yet nature calls to worship though the ears of men be stopped. In the gray of dawn her voice is clear and wooing and as the loggers tighten their

heavy belts and greet the day with shouldered ax she whispers—"Praise!" In the busy noon, amidst the ruin of bruised and broken pines, the playing winds echo her morning wish—"Praise!" When the hush of evening falls upon the dying day and the purple west looks through the crown of green, while weary men turn homeward to the camps, she sends her good-night call—"Praise!" But the campmen, untutored in her language, sightless to her beckoning, make no response: they rather damn the cook for his "bum grub" and "the push" for a thousand things.

The Church has gone into the populous, accessible places, proclaiming her message: the solitudes have been untouched. Perhaps the Church considered the solitudes a thankless task, promising small returns; perhaps it looked on the lumber district as a domain for which the fallen one held a properly signed patent; perhaps it did not know the big need of the unthinking forest men. Whatever the cause, it is evident to all who know the lumber regions that His Satanic Majesty rules there and draws a large revenue from his realm. His authority has scarcely been questioned.

On visiting a camp for the first time the

missionary is apt to inquire: "Ever have any preachers up this way?"

"No: nobody cares whether we land in hell or not," is likely to be the answer.

"Preachers are only after the stake," said one; "they don't care for us poor devils. Their heaven is for the rich. We're only welcome down the slide."

"Here's one who doesn't ask for cash, but wants to give the lumberjacks a lift," replied the minister.

"Where's the guy you're talkin' about?" asked the wondering jack, not being accustomed to preachers in loggers' clothing.

"I'm the fellow," laughed the missionary; "and I'll prove it in the bunk house to-night by preaching to the crew. Get busy and let the boys know that something is going to happen at seven thirty."

There is no suggestion of "the cloth" about Frank Higgins. If you met him on the trail, "turkey" on his back, you would think him a healthy, sober lumberjack headed for camp at a good steady gait. He dresses like his parishioners, mackinaw jacket, boots and cap. The touch of sun and wind has bronzed his full face, his stride is the swing of the old timer, and his broad shoulders are in keeping with the forest about him. Big

and healthy, he is five feet nine and over and weighs two hundred pounds. The eyes are clear, the jaw resolute, the grip hearty, the voice unforced brotherliness. He looks a man: he is one.

After supper the men crowd the bunk house, smoking, swearing, rollicking like schoolboys or quarrelling over trifles in their narrow lives. What an audience! It is cosmopolitan: the ends of the earth have contributed all classes and conditions—the best, the worst—and the stamp of isolation is on every face. The "deacons' benches" at the ends of the bunks are crowded, and the bunks above are filled with men in every attitude that fancy can suggest. No churchly congregation this! Free as the forest air, it is informal as Eden but not so cleanly. The men are bootless and their stockinged feet dangling from crowded bunks suggest a chimney scene on Christmas night. Around the blazing stove the discarded boots lie in drying heaps; on the rack above hundreds of damp socks speak in arrogant eloquence. The smoke of cheap tobacco thickens the turbid atmosphere, the reeking lanterns glow like sickly fireflies, and the only note of cheer comes from the cylindrical stove which pours its heat in undiscouraged plenty. Nothing suggests the

sanctuary, yet men have met God in these places and the bunk house has become a bethel.

An upturned barrel serves for pulpit, and a horse blanket, bearing the manufacturer's name in large letters, is the embroidered altar cloth. No Genevan gown lends grace to the preacher, but coatless he stands—a shirt-sleeved messenger of God.

"Sing No. 31, boys," he says; "it's easy and it's a good one. Let her go!"

> "Alas and did my Saviour bleed,
> And did my sovereign die?"

The hymn is old and the boys welcome it lustily. The music lacks in sweetness: in volume it abounds.

"You can do better. Hit it harder on the next verse."

They do; they shout it forth in full voice, pleased with the song, glad for the privilege of singing. Then the chorus: "At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light," shakes the bunk house and wanders over the far reaches of the night-bound forest. In our fashionable churches trained voices blend in superb harmony; but this is the music of songless lives.

Scripture is read or recited, for the dim lanterns make reading difficult. Then comes the sermon, plain and forceful in condemnation and help. Do the lumberjacks listen respectfully? They have been feeding on husks, and here is a table spread with bread. They have known the companionship of swine in the form of men, of vampires who resembled women; they have wanted love and have found lust, and the story presented is of a better life, a cleaner world, and love that knows no selfishness. They have dreamed of heaven while living on the borders of hell, and the story of the minister brings the dreams near enough to grasp. The camp missionaries are neither fanatical nor sanctimonious, yet fearless and tender. Cutting, bruising sentences, denunciations that burn and scar, flow in volcanic heat from their lips; but keeping pace with the blunt invective is the tender passion of wholesome love.

I well remember a sermon Higgins preached on the Prodigal Son; but it cannot be reproduced without the environment. It suited the hearers; the brand of the far country was on their cheeks. It was too plain for a city gathering and would have emptied a staid church where fashion decrees

that truth must be carefully handled and presented in choice verbiage. Figures of speech had little place in it; of poetry it had none save direct simplicity; it was unadorned Anglo-Saxon in the crash and clang of strength, the beat of a powerful sea on a rock-ribbed shore. But from beginning to end ran the clearly discerned cord of love that makes even censure tender and direct blame compassionate. To quote a lumberjack's description: "He showed us our dirt and gave us the love of God for a wash."

Here are some extracts, from memory:

"One of the boys stayed at home and one left the homestead. Now it wasn't the fellow who stayed at home that the father was worrying about, but the fellow who packed his 'turkey' and went to 'blow his stake.' You lumberjacks are in that youngster's place and the old folks are wondering where you are and what you are doing. Because a man leaves home it isn't necessary to go to hell; but the chances are greater that he'll land there if he cuts out all the ties and memories."

Then came the story of his own home leaving and how mother watched him until the turn of the road hid him from view.

"That mother's prayers have followed me

through life. My story is yours with the names changed. Write to the mother to-night. . . .

"Because the fellow had money he soon had friends; but there never was a friend worth having who was made or bought by money. This young fellow in the parable reminds me of a lumberjack coming down river in the spring and landing in Bemidji or Deer River. Men who never heard of him claim his acquaintance at once; the barkers from the dens wait for him at the trains to give him the glad hand; he has friends galore—he has money. But they bleed him to a fine finish as they did the prodigal in the Bible. The same gang that sent the prodigal to the hogs dump you fellows in the 'snake room.' There are saloon men in the logging towns who have your wages figured up already and they chuckle as they toast their shins at the base-burner, thinking what a good time they'll have when the boys come down in the spring. Don't think you are working for yourselves: the saloon bunch cash your checks and bank your coin.

"Some of the men in the saloon business came to these parts when I did and were as poor as I am; now they live in the finest houses in the North and eat the best the land

provides. Their wives are dressed in silks and glisten with the jewels you earned—but you fellows still wear coarse socks and haven't a cent in your jeans. Were you ever invited to these homes you built for the gamblers, saloonmen and brothel-keepers? Were you ever introduced to these wives you dressed in silks and jewels? No: and you never will be. They don't want you—it's your cash they're after. That's the treatment the prodigal got: that's the way they treat the lumberjack to-day."

"Right you are, Higgins!" commented a woodsman admiringly.

"Bill ought to know! He's been there!" came a voice from the rear; and the camp roared.

"The prodigal's money didn't last long; but I think he didn't blow it all at one shot as you fellows do. But they probably short-changed him, like they do in Leecher's place (the name was given); and if he was slow in letting go his wad they probably 'rolled' him for the cash as many of you fellows have been robbed in Chance's and Boozeman's and Tipple's down the line." Higgins fearlessly named the saloons and the audience nodded agreement. "He went broke," continued the preacher, "and asked for a lift, but those

fellows weren't in the lifting business. Their business was to help him to spend. Do you remember when you were spent you tried to make a raise from the chap whose till held your money and he gave you a hunch to go up river and earn more? The prodigal was in the same boat; and they said to him: 'Go up river, old man, it's the husks and the hogs for you now.'

"But while the men who rob and spoil will not give you a hand the Father will. In the father's house the prodigal found a welcome, clean clothes, clean food and clean love." Then came the gospel message, full of cheer and loving hope—the story of the crucified dying for the lost, the homestead open and Almighty help given unstintedly. It was a homely sermon, a plain message, a description of life they understood too well because they had experienced it. Many a head bowed in shame as the story proceeded. It was a tale, not of the time of Christ, but taken from their own lives, and when the preacher spoke of the loving Father there was expectancy in the hard faces of the auditors.

After this sermon on a former occasion a young man came to Higgins. The talk had awakened a longing for real love; he was tired of the bitter way.

"Pilot," he said, "I want to pray for myself. Tell me how."

"Come on, my boy!" The preacher swung his arm across the youngster's shoulders. "We'll pray together under the pines."

Beneath the green trees on the frozen snow they knelt and the Ever-Approachable heard and answered. The next day the lad wrote to his mother, who had not heard from him for months, telling of the new hope that possessed him. When Higgins received her letter of gratitude and read: "For this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found," he saw a new figure in the parable—it was the prodigal's mother.

There is also the incident of John McCradie, a boy of good antecedents who promised well. His parents, looking to the future, sent him to a prominent Canadian college. But John fell into evil ways and by the end of his sophomore year had succeeded in shaming his parents and disgracing himself. He thought the matter over and quietly disappeared, leaving no clue to his purposes or destination. In a Minnesota logging camp, forty miles from a railway, young McCradie obtained work as a cookee, where his days passed in washing dishes, feeding the hungry

fires and more hungry lumberjacks. To all appearances John McCradie was like the rest of his associates, profligate and willful: but his conscience would not sleep. Higgins came to the inland camp to preach and the cookee went to hear him. The service promised an hour's diversion. Frank Higgins, however, has an uncomfortable way of making his message personal. There may be a hundred men in the audience, but Higgins cannot talk to the mass: he talks to a hundred individuals and finds the joints in the harness.

McCradie was sore in spots after the Pilot's talk. He went back to the cook-shack bearing with him a resurrected collection of resolutions. McCradie and the cook (a sensible fellow despite his indulgences with the bottle) talked over life's possibilities until the low hour of midnight. The next day a conspicuous new sign, "No Swearing Allowed in This Room," caught the eyes of the jacks as they entered for breakfast. The jacks spelled out the lettering, looked at each other incredulously, then fell to the food, wondering what had bewitched the kitchen crew that so necessary an accomplishment should be in ill-repute. The missionary also saw the sign and it seemed like Luther's theses on the door of

Wittenberg—the promise of another reformation. To Higgins the cookee told his story and the kindly Pilot led him into the larger life made possible through Jesus Christ. In the presence of the cook and his other assistant John McCradie made his profession of allegiance: "From this day I am going to live a Christian life."

"Shake, John, shake!" heartily cried the cook; "it's a good move; it won't hurt you a damned bit."

"Amen!" echoed the preacher. "Drop a letter to the home folk, John; it will be good news to them."

After the meeting, when the shack is lighted only by the stray gleams that steal through the chinks in the stove, some of the men talk to the minister of their far-off homes and the loved ones not seen for years. By the burning fire in the dark bunk house many a long closed heart has surrendered to God. Sometimes a man invites the preacher to sleep with him in his bunk. Since in most camps the missionary is generously accorded the privileges of the office, the invitation of the lumberjack is not alluring, but is never refused. The missionary knows that the request is due to some spiritual difficulty and

that in the darkness and quiet he will be privileged to help a burdened soul.

That sweet old favourite hymn, the song of home and prayer-meeting, the source of comfort in the house of mourning, is the favourite in the camps—"Jesus Lover of My Soul." These unloved men of the distant places love the hymn which speaks of the tender Christ opening His bosom to the outcasts. Its plaintive melody appeals and they sing it with the spirit of those who long for sympathy and help. The night before, upon one occasion, they had sung it over and over again, the whole camp joining in the praise. After breakfast the men went to the bunk house to wait for the word of the "push" ordering them to "the works." While they waited a rich tenor voice struck up the hymn,

> "Jesus lover of my soul,
> Let me to thy bosom fly!"

One by one the men joined in and the solo passed into a chorus of a hundred voices. Out through the twilight the melody rolled, waking the sleeping pines, crossing frozen lakes. The men in the stables, harnessing their horses, heard the song and softly

whistled it; the cook, busy with the pots and pans, hummed it in unison and the swearing cookee closed his profane mouth and listened in astonished silence. Over in the office where the officials slept, the song caused silent amazement, for it was unlike the morning hour when oaths and curses break the stillness.

> "Other refuge have I none,
> Hangs my helpless soul on Thee,"

sang the men, unconscious of aught save the song.

> "Leave, oh, leave me not alone" —

and it came from the hearts of those who knew the weight of lonely weeks and months.

The Sky Pilot in the office turned his face to the wall and prayed while they sang.

"All out!" cried the "push."

From the shack streamed the men singing the song of comfort. Into groups they separated, each going his appointed way, but the hymn continued in all parts of the forest until the sweet melody died to tender murmurs and was lost in the distant evergreens. In all that North Star State no hap-

pier body of men went forth to toil, for with them went the spirit of the song.

Sometimes disturbances mar the meetings, but not so frequently as in the early days. The mission is better understood and the realization of its value has wrought a change in sentiment. But when Mr. Higgins first began he found it necessary to use a little "muscular Christianity" to assist in regulating the deportment of the gatherings.

A "top-loader," partly drunk and having no relish for anything savouring of Protestantism, disturbed the meeting with profane remarks.

"This is our church, boys, the only church we have." The voice of Higgins was low and sad.

While the crew sang the minister tried to silence the disturber but was unsuccessful. Spiritual and militant religion blend in Higgins and the present case invited militant treatment. It got it. With a rush surprising in suddenness—for large bodies are supposed to move slowly and Higgins weighs two hundred pounds—the preacher was on the disturber, who, a moment later, lay half buried in a snow-drift.

The prone man brushed the snow from

his face, looked at the preacher and slowly drawled his surprise:

"Say, Mr. Higgins, what church d' you belong to?"

"*This church!*" Higgins pointed to the bunk house. "If you want to worship with us, come in and behave."

Where a camp is near a village, alcohol is easy to obtain, and Sunday, being a day of rest, becomes a day of carousal. There were several camps near Island Lake Village, and on the Sunday of Frank Higgins' visit the boys were "tanking up." The spirit of whiskey showed itself at the afternoon meeting with many disturbances. One intoxicated man was finally thrown out by the minister and affairs moved more smoothly afterwards. An hour later Higgins was in the village of Island Lake and the woodsman who had been ejected came staggering up to him, accompanied by a score of his mates, also under the influence of liquor.

"Are you the blank preacher who fired me out of camp?" asked the man of the sudden exit. He was evidently looking for trouble.

"I'm the man," replied Higgins, drawing back his broad shoulders and advancing; "what have you to say against it?"

As steadily as his unsteady legs would allow, the lumberjack looked over the minister and suddenly changed his mind about the intended row.

"Not a word, preacher; not a word. I ain't got a word to say again' it," he mumbled bibulously. "I just wanted to know if you was the man—that's all." He looked admiringly at the strong arms. "You're all right. 'Twas a blank good throw. Don't you ever think I've got anything again' it."

Turning to the other lumberjacks, Mr. Higgins said:

"Boys, did you ever know Higgins to do you a bad turn? Yet for the sport of the thing you get this poor drunken fellow to cause trouble. Is that a proper return?"

The men were ashamed and walked away. That night in a near-by camp almost every man of them came to the preacher after the meeting.

"Forget it, Pilot," said the spokesman. "We're ashamed of ourselves, but you know it was whiskey done it. Whiskey's your only enemy in these woods. Forget it and shake."

"Thanks, boys. I have already. Give me your hands."

The day after the meeting is the time for personal work. While the service is in progress the evangelist singles out the men most receptive and later joins them at their work. Here is where the finely developed body comes into play for the King. Workmen admire those who are capable in their own line, and Frank Higgins can swing an ax or pull a saw with the best; and while he works he talks of Him whose messenger he is. In this way he became acquainted with "Old Grouchy." During the meeting the old man had sat in his bunk with a nondescript dog in his lap. Loneliness was stamped on his deep-lined face. The others sang; he was silent.

"Don't you sing?" the missionary had asked, handing him a book.

"Naw! None o' your blank business!" bellowed the man in a scarcely understandable snarl.

The next day Higgins joined "Old Grouchy," the road-monkey, at his work.

"Good-morning," hailed the Pilot.

"Mornin'," snarled "Old Grouchy," in a non-committal tone.

"Your roads are almost perfect," said Higgins, sparring for an opening.

"Bad; infernally bad," was the growled reply.

"Like the job?" asked the preacher, to encourage conversation.

"Yes: I like it like the damned like their lodgings!" burst out the road-monkey. "What is it to you? You can't change it."

Higgins was discouraged. What was the use of trying to help a fellow like this? Before the preacher could make reply the yellow dog turned from its pursuit of pine squirrels and ran to him for attention. It was "just dog," but the "road-monkey's" eyes fell on it lovingly.

"A good friend of yours?" said the Pilot.

"The only friend I have." The snarl was gone; the tone was soft, reflective.

Higgins talked of his own dog team, the faithfulness of the dumb creatures, their intelligence and companionship. "Old Grouchy" joined the conversation, which drifted gradually to matters more personal, and soon the whole story of the man's life was told and the cause of his cynicism bared. It was a story of startling disappointment, of a home wrecked through unfaithfulness. No man could hear it and remain untouched.

"No wonder your world is darkened," said the preacher sadly; "if I had your experience I doubt if I'd feel as I do to-day."

The missionary tried to lead the old man

into the brighter paths of peace; but nothing appealed to the sad soul of the man. The Gospel revived no hope. The sun was set. The gloomy curtains of night covered all. When Mr. Higgins went back in later days the road-monkey listened attentively to the presentation of the Gospel, caressed his yellow dog and seemed to wonder if it were possible that the great God cared. "Sing, brother!" said the missionary. The old man shook his head. He would not sing. Nay! he could not. His heart-strings were withered; melody had left him through the faithlessness of a woman.

But in after days he found a quiet comfort when in town in visiting the missionary's home and playing for hours with the missionary's little Marguerite.

It looks like barren ground, this field of the pineries, where men are hardened in muscle and morals by the rough labours and rougher indulgences of their lives, where sin and vice are very familiar and ethical practice strange, yet the seed long dormant finds root and comes to fruitage in the fullness of time. It was so with Billy the Canadian. Billy had often attended the meetings but showed no outward results. A broken back sent him to

the hospital where a missionary visited him. There was no hope for Billy's recovery, so they took him to his Canadian home to die among kinsmen. There in the long days of pain and waiting the seed bore its fruit. Billy the Canadian passed over the river lighted by the presence of Him who said, "I am the light of the world."

In February of last year Mr. Higgins and the writer preached in Haley's camp on the Duluth and Iron Range. The crew consisted of one hundred and sixty men in which the following nationalities took the lead: Finlanders, Polanders, Austrians, Swedes and Americans. The men listened with interest although some of them mended their clothes while we preached. Two days later, on a train, we met Mr. Haley. "I had a big surprise yesterday," he said; "for the first time since I have been in these woods I found that lumberjacks are interested in religion. Out at the works I found the jacks discussing the meeting you fellows held in the bunk house the night before; later, at the lunch-ground, the topic was religion, and down at the skidway they were going over the same thing. It was a new view to me. I tell you, if your work does nothing more than furnish a decent topic for conversation it accomplishes a

great deal. I wish you and your men would come oftener. It helps; and anything that gives a boost to the awful proposition we loggers have on our hands is a thing to be encouraged. Why, even the scaler, who thinks he is something of an infidel, admitted that the work was doing good! Come again! You're welcome any time!"

The far-seeing, unprejudiced loggers, men of practical type, are lending encouragement to the mission; where one opposes twenty are ready to give words of cheer and to open the doors on which they have placed a welcome. One man, when asked for permission to hold services in his camps, said: "I want to tell you, Mr. Higgins, that I am superintendent of this company because of your work in the woods. Years ago I was aimless and wasteful but I heard a word from you that changed it all and I am glad to give the other boys a chance to hear the same thing that made a man of me. Preach here and send your men, for we all need the uplift of the Gospel." While Mr. Higgins preached in a certain camp there was a wondrous quiet, for the Spirit of God brooded there and men were silent in His presence. No one was surprised when a woodsman walked up to the preacher and said: "Mr. Higgins, I

want you to pray for me right now." The sermon closed without another word and prayer took its place. When the minister closed his prayer, the man said: "I want to pray for myself," and in the presence of the listening camp he made his petition for pardon.

Turning to his bunk mates, he said: "This is the end of my old life. In the future I am for Jesus Christ." The next evening the campmen received a new idea of Christian service. The convert took out his violin and began to play "Jesus Lover of My Soul." The lumberjacks were interested in this, but astonished when the convert drew out his Bible and read a chapter. Astonished at the reading, they were dumbfounded when he announced that he was going to give them "a talk." He had learned the principles of the Scriptures in his youth, and now, in the light of a new experience which made it doubly precious to him, he explained the Word of God. Through the winter he continued to hold meetings with the men and in all the North woods there was no prouder camp, for it claimed to be the only one having a settled pastor.

"The groves were God's first temples." To-day, in the green solitudes, under the unchanging pines, men are worshipping.

VIII

READIN' MATTER

THE long winter evenings and the unbroken hours of Sunday had little to relieve their monotony until Frank Higgins filled his "turkey" with old magazines and distributed them among the boys. He had noticed that amusements were few; time had to be "killed"—not used—and the blessed hours of leisure were profitless. He therefore wrote to the churches asking for old magazines and the response was generous. Several tons came to Bemidji, well enough selected material. The magazines went into a hundred camps that winter and by their resurrected usefulness brightened many an hour. Great good has come from this feature; minds have been given another vent: indecent conversations, too common and too continuous, have largely passed away; new topics suggested by the magazines are discussed; and occasionally some one will read aloud that all may share a choice bit of amusement or strange de-

scription. Even the illiterate find recreation in the illustrations.

Before the literature came there were few tables in the bunk houses; but after its introduction they were recognized as necessities and many of the contractors provided them for the convenience of the reading men. In a Northern camp, which he was visiting for the first time, Mr. Higgins distributed the magazines after the service, and immediately there was a rush for the wannigan to buy lanterns. The scanty stock soon exchanged hands and the demand continued.

"What's up in the bunk house?" asked the clerk of the Sky Pilot. "Are you trying to turn the bunk shack into a night school? I've sold every lantern I've got and the jacks are yelling for more."

"I've distributed a few magazines so the boys can read something helpful," said the minister.

"Lumberjacks improving their minds!" sarcastically returned the clerk. "This neck of the woods will have a university extension course next, if this keeps up."

"You surely don't object to the boys reading?" asked Higgins.

"Not at all," replied the clerk sulkily; "but you might have remembered that a

clerk has lots of time on his hands and have left a few of your mind-improvers in the office."

"Well, if that's where the shoe pinches, help yourself," said the minister, pointing to his pack.

When a box of magazines is opened after service, the men who have gone to bed arise and greedily take their share. These papers are passed from one to another, being read and reread, until worn out with much handling. God only can number the minds that have found refreshment and rest through the gifts that cost so little! Short, helpful tracts, carefully selected, are likewise carried by the workers and thousands of the Gospel of John are given to the men. Last year about ten tons of magazines and nearly two thousand Testaments were distributed in a hundred and fifty camps. Martin Johnson, a camp missionary, gave a "little John" to a cook who became quite interested in the evangelist's description of our Saviour's life. "Here's a good thing," he thought, and decided to pass the contents along while retaining the volume. I suppose the cook had heard of family worship, or it may be that his originality was not limited to cakes and "biscuit shootin'."

On New Year's morning, 1911, when the men assembled for breakfast no food was served. Instead, the cook stepped to the head of the table and began to speak:

"I've just got onto a pretty good thing in the readin' line. Somethin' new an' up to date. A little book by a fellow named John. I don't know his last name; it just says 'by John.' I thought I'd open the new year by readin' a little from this John so you fellows can improve your minds and morals, if you happen to have any of either left."

He opened the book and began to read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The hungry crew was amazed into speechlessness. The cook continued, unconscious of the mental commotion his strange act excited. The men expected only profanity and food from him;—and he was actually reading the Bible! Then murmurings arose and grew louder until the voice of the reader was lost in the hubbub. The cook, however—always an autocrat at the table—was not to be silenced in his own domain. His wrath kindled. Stepping over to the meat block he grasped a butcher knife and faced the crew with the Word in one hand and the knife in the other.

"The first bloat that interrupts the readin' will lose his mutt. This man John knows a thing or two an' you've got to hear what John says. Now listen!"

The reading was uninterrupted and the chapter was finished before any man tasted food.

IX

IN THE GREAT WHITE SILENCE

THE loose snow descended and fell in showers upon us whenever we touched the overhanging boughs; under foot the white cover lay deep and unbroken. It was bitter cold. Fortunately there was no wind. Higgins plodded heavily under the burden of his pack and I with a lighter one followed in his footsteps.

"Enjoying it?" he asked, pausing in the going.

I did not speak; it was too cold to answer.

"We're going through life for the last time and we're having a dandy time," he said in answer to my scowl. "The fellows in the city have to go to the art galleries to see poor pictures of this; and painted canvas doesn't give them an appetite." Higgins pointed to the snow-dressed pines beautiful in their God-made toilet—a landscape of crystal and green lit by a cloudless sun.

In spite of cold I smiled a reply.

"If I were a city pastor I couldn't afford a private park like this. Isn't that Norway

ahead enough to make a man thank God for his eyesight? It's a suggestion to live right. Sometimes the trail between camps is long, yet I always enjoy it, and when I get to the end there are the boys—poor lonely fellows, that perhaps I can help."

It is always *the boys* with Higgins; in them he gets his greatest joy.

"I get a hundred times more out of this than I deserve or put into it." Higgins was tightening his shoulder straps. "Aren't the boys good to me? Did you notice old Bill, the shanty boss, whisper to me at breakfast? He said he'd saved two hundred dollars and had it in the bank. It makes me happy to think that old Bill is two hundred dollars away from the poorhouse."

The man's optimism was contagious. In spite of the hard travelling I found myself looking at the hills in his park and at the man whose uncomplaining philosophy made their beauty visible while his altruism covered the snow-clogged trail and robbed hard labour of its struggles and aches.

Beautiful is the deep mantle of pinery snow. Nor soot nor stain mars the bosom of the earth; only the long stretch of "the white silence," reaching ever northward, is

before one. But the work of the missionaries is increased by the heavy snow, and the delight of the forest is often lost in the heart-breaking toil of the journeys. Put the "turkey" on your back and try the trudge. See if romance does not depart as weariness enters the limbs. Step forward in the early morning through the new-fallen snow. The north wind is visiting the forest and his breath penetrates even your furry clothing. Go on! The camp that ends the journey is only the little distance of ten long, lonely, humanless miles! The pack may be heavy; but soon you are transporting a mountain that grows to an endless range of Himalayas. Pleasure departs and the hard spirit of fatigue is your blighting company. Every step is an effort; every blast of the wind reaches the marrow; the exposed face feels like cold onyx and the wind-inflamed eyes look through frozen lashes for the smoke of the cook-house above the murmuring trees. The finger-tips protest against the numbing cold and the arms swing to force the frozen blood to the pained extremities. Mile after mile, endlessly the trail stretches on; mile after mile the weary feet drag their heavy burden; mile after mile the pain and suffering continue.

At last, yonder in the green sea of Norway lances, the column of smoke rises like a beacon to tell of warmth and food and the safe companionship of men. The view of the camp stimulates. Moses saw the Promised Land from a distance, but the sight of that rude collection of clay-chinked log shacks means more to you, tired and almost frozen, than the land beyond the muddy Jordan did to the writer of the Pentateuch. It means a chance to rest, to warm—and, to the missionary, who is daily journeying through the ice-bound forest, the privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ to the rough-hewn, sin-marked men of the pineries. Minnesota's winters are severe. The mercury often registers thirty degrees below zero, not seldom reaching a lower mark. In early November the ground freezes solid and the ice remains in the lakes until late in April. The impassable swamps become the winter highways and the lakes a glassy roadbed.

Early in his camp operations, Frank Higgins secured a team of Saint Bernard dogs for transportation purposes. The idea was practical. It furnished easy means of locomotion; the difficulties of stabling were simplified and the cost of food was almost

nothing. Where the run was between points on the railroads the sled and dogs could ride in the baggage car. On the rough forest trails, the team proved good travellers, being none the worse for thirty or forty miles a day. Flash and Spark assisted the logging-camp mission into easier paths: for the lumberjacks are passionately fond of animals, and the advent of the fine team made a favourable impression. Many of the bunk-house doors are secured by a sliding latch. Against such the missionary drove his team and with his whole equipment entered the sleeping apartments. The sudden arrival aroused interest, and while the men crowded around the handsome dogs, Higgins explained his business and announced the time of meeting.

On a journey from Northome to International Falls, Frank Higgins lost his way in the Little Fork country. At nightfall he built a fire against a pine stump and collected wood to replenish it. He had with him a rabbit, and this he divided with his dogs. It was the only food since morning. Sweet green boughs of pine furnished a bed above the snow; the robes from the sled added comfort, and the closely pressing dogs helped to keep out the cold. During the night the

howling of timber wolves awakened man and dogs; in the dark circle around the temporary camp could be seen the fire-balls of their eyes, and the distinct voices chilled the listener. The missionary arose and rebuilt his fire, and as it broke into a cheery blaze the disappointed wolves sent back a more distant sound, until the silence of the forest resumed its interrupted reign. Early next morning Higgins was on his way: the lost trail was found and he arrived at Little Forks, where he conducted the first religious service ever held in that place.

On another occasion, Mr. Higgins, blinded by a sudden snow-storm, lost all sense of direction, and spent the day wandering through a muskeg. Towards evening, the worst of the blizzard having passed, he found the trail and completed the journey. After supper he carried food to his dogs, but they refused to eat. The day had been hard and the missionary thought that they were fagged through overexertion. Before retiring he again tried them with food but they did not respond. Higgins arose early to visit them. On the way to the barn he met the hotel proprietor, whose face was red with anger.

"Is them blank dogs yourn?" burst out the man.

"They are," replied Higgins.

"Then cash up for the pork the brutes downed while you was at supper. The cannibals swiped half a hog an' ate it. I ain't got nothin' but eggs an' salt-horse to give the boarders to-day."

While the enraged hotel-keeper narrated his tale of woe a load of anxiety rolled from the preacher's mind and he laughed heartily, to the intense astonishment of his excited auditor.

In the month of January, 1906, Frank Higgins, while crossing Red Lake, was caught in a sudden blizzard. The unopposed wind swept down the miles of icy surface filling the air with choking snow. The distant shore disappeared and all directions seemed alike. Night came on but the darkness scarcely added to the helplessness of the wanderer. To the Father who ruleth the rain of summer and snow of winter, he sent his prayer for help; and what man could not do was done by the leading of God. He who guides the stars in their courses led the lost to the wooded shore. No human habitation was near; neither did Higgins know the direction of the nearest village. For hours he wandered in the forest, and near midnight

came to an Indian's cabin where he was kindly received. When the family learned that he was a minister, the old squaw placed a Bible in his hands and requested him to read and pray. About twenty years before this, Dr. Jos. A. Gilfillan, an Episcopal missionary, had given her the Bible. With the Indian family Higgins thanked the God of all peoples for His impartial care and goodness.

On another occasion when returning from a long woods trip, Higgins crossed a frozen lake in the teeth of a fierce wind. With difficulty he made his way against the beating gusts and when he reached the sawmill at the head of the lake he instantly fell asleep from cold and exhaustion. The engineer saw the collapse and heroically dashed a pail of water over the sleeping man, bringing him back to consciousness. In his frozen condition sleep would have resulted in death. Although the missionaries are mostly experienced woodsmen, well acquainted with the trackless forest, yet the blizzard drives many of them into unknown paths. Jack McCall, who serves the camps around Cloquet, Minnesota, was lost last winter for several hours and when he found shelter he was eight miles off his trail. In the winter of 1909 Rev. Ole

O. Fugleskjel, a Lutheran minister, on his way from Silver Creek to Clemenston, lost the path in a storm and his frozen body was recovered several days afterwards. A Northern blizzard is no plaything. It obliterates all tracks, blinds the wayfarer and becomes a mockery and a menace. Reilly, the lumberjack, knew all this and worried about his friend Higgins who had left camp before the unexpected storm arrived. The night was nearing. The way to Camp 1 was new to the preacher and Reilly feared he might not reach his destination. Lighting his lantern the lumberjack started through the darkening forest to render aid in case he should be needed. But Higgins had arrived safely, held his service and was retiring when Reilly made the camp.

"Why did you come out a night like this?" asked Higgins.

"Oh, I thought you might miss your way and maybe I could be useful to you. You went out of your way once for me," said Reilly simply.

The foreman invited Reilly to stay through the night, but he refused all invitations, and retraced the snow-covered trail, happy in the consciousness that the Pilot was safe.

The changing weather is the greatest danger to the lonely traveller but occasionally, near the Canadian boundary, the timber wolves place life in jeopardy. One Saturday night John Sornberger arrived at a new camp on the Canadian Northern Railway, where he expected to preach, but the foreman refused him permission. Since he could not accomplish his mission, Sornberger would not remain over night and set out for the nearest camp, six miles away. Just beyond the clearing the wolves took up his trail and followed the solitary traveller. Howling wolves were no novelty to him and he gave them little attention until they showed signs of attacking. Tearing birch bark from the trees he made torches and under the protection of the blaze returned to camp where he borrowed a lantern. On the second attempt he travelled three miles before the wolves again became troublesome. But they grew accustomed to the light and became bolder as their numbers increased. Only the constant swinging of the lantern kept them from attacking him. It would probably have gone ill with Sornberger if he had not providentially come upon a steam log loader in which he took refuge. With the watchman he spent the night in comfort.

A long leaf-shaking blast sounded through the morning twilight of the pineries; it echoed in the green dome of the forest, spread itself into whispers and became part of the great silence imprisoning the North. In response to the cookee's ear-splitting alarm, Rev. Frank Higgins sprang from his hay-filled bunk, made his toilet and hastened to the cook shack. It was Sunday, a day big with opportunity. On other days preaching was possible only when the men returned in the evening: to-day he could preach to three camps. He had held service in this camp the evening before and at eleven to-day he intended to speak in Camp 3, twelve miles away.

As Higgins left the clearing a lumberjack hailed him:

"Thought I'd walk along, Pilot, for company's sake."

"Glad to have you, John," returned the minister. "How goes it?"

"Fine, mighty fine! Haven't tasted a drop this winter. Hand over your pack; I'm out for exercise."

The lumberjack adjusted the burden to his shoulders, remarking: "About fifty pounds, ain't it?"

"Just about," was the reply; then, in ex-

planation: "Hymn-books, Testaments and a few necessities."

The tote-road miles passed quickly under the hastening feet, the balsamic air explored the deep recesses of the lungs, and the cold made their faces tingle. They walked a while in silence.

"Let me take the 'turkey.' You make me ashamed of myself," said Higgins. "You've carried it half-way."

"See here, Pilot," answered the jack determinedly, "I land this pack in Camp 3. You handed me a big lift when I was down and out. This is the first chance I've had to swamp for you. God knows you done a heap for me!"

The picture of a year ago came to Higgins: a man spent, drunk, filthy, sick from knock-out drops, lying in a "snake room," dying, for all they cared who had thrown him there after robbing him. Higgins had helped him up, watched him during the following months, and had finally seen him naturalized into the kingdom of God. This clean-limbed burden-bearer, walking steadily at his side, was the former "snake-room" drunkard, who, out of gratitude, now carried the missionary's pack twelve miles to Camp 3.

Some of the men in Camp 3 heard the

Gospel that day for the first time in many years. After dinner Higgins shouldered his pack and trudged eight miles to Cowan's Camp. The audience was waiting, news of the minister's coming having preceded him. The hymn of praise awakened the silence of the forest and through the profaned bunk house rolled the voice of prayer. The Lord was in His holy temple and the lumberjacks were silent before Him.

"I'm goin' to write home," said a young fellow after the meeting. "The folks don't know where I am. Tell me how to get next to God. I'm tired of this."

"Listen, boy," said the Pilot earnestly; "only one thing will rest you: give your load to Jesus Christ. What was the text?"

"I will give you rest," repeated the tired one.

"Right! Hang on to that and remember He still says 'Come.' God bless you, boy. I'll pray for you."

The ten miles to the place of evening service, Campbell's Camp, were weary ones, and Higgins was worn when he threw down his pack and opened the meeting. Campbell's Camp was hallowed that night with its first benediction. After the "bull-cook" had extinguished the lights many a man examined

himself under the search-light of a new resolve.

"Tired of your job, Pilot?" asked the clerk, as Higgins slowly climbed into the hay-filled bunk and drew the horse blankets over him.

"Clerk, I wouldn't exchange my job for the best congregation in the land. Think of it, clerk! One of the boys carried my pack twelve miles to-day! God and the boys are too good to me. I wish I could show my appreciation more. Wake me early. It's a long walk to Camp 9. Good-night."

"Thirty miles to-day to preach to God-forsaken lumberjacks," murmured the clerk as he blew out the light. "The Sky Pilot has something I wish I had."

Higgins was already asleep.

X

"MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY"

"MUSCULAR Christianity" seems foreign to this matter-of-fact age; it is too militant for our indifference, too strenuous for an apathetic church. Nevertheless it belongs to our time, for the camp mission work is twofold: Christian and muscular, and each phase makes large demands. Let some one more interested in the dead past write the story of the rough, earnest crusaders, who fought in the name of the gentle Christ with blood-letting swords and flesh-piercing spears. That is a tale distant, past; this narrative is near and present. No weapon is forged on the anvil for this warfare. Death is not the aim, but life increased through the spirit of love. The banner alone is the same—The Banner of the Cross.

Physical fitness, of no common order, is required. The Northern pineries demand strength of limb, endurance and hardiness—these are capital and stock in trade. Where the frolicsome winds drive the mercury thirty

BRAIN IS NOT DESPISED, BUT BRAWN IS HONOURED AND ENDURANCE IS THE IDEAL OF THE LUMBERJACK.

or forty degrees below zero, and hold it in that low retreat for days, the men must be vigorous to stand the taunts of wind and fettering cold. Lumbering wants no weakling, either as pastor or axman. Brain is not despised, but brawn is honoured and endurance is the ideal of the lumberjack. The city pastor, in his work for souls, finds head and heart predominating; the logging camp missionary realizes that bodily excellence is the first essential—heart and head are secondary in the estimation of his parishioners. A weakling is pitied, a strong man respected. But to strength must be added devotion if a man is to win as Christ's messenger.

It follows that the ministry we look for in the city is not asked for in the forest. The object is the same—the souls of men—but the methods and means are not taught by the seminaries. The argument of a man who is scientific with his fist and nimble of leg is sure of a ready reception if he loves his fellows and trusts his God. Physical Christianity is being successfully used to point men to Christ: not forcing acceptance of His teaching but using for the King every power He has given. Of more value than discussion is narrative, and so I present a few plain tales of the labours of the missionary and of the

fights once too common in the logging district.

The winter of 1905 was closing, and the Rev. Frank E. Higgins, while making his rounds, found himself, after nightfall, in a Northern village, which was little more than a collection of tar-paper shacks. It claimed a population of two hundred. Nine saloons ornamented the town. One would search long, even in the logging district, for a place more influenced by open sin. At the lunch counter in the rear of a saloon, the missionary must needs take his meal, and the drinking woodsmen laughingly invited him to drink with them.

"I'll tell you what I'll do, boys; if my dog will drink the stuff you fellows are imbibing I'll join you," said Higgins.

He called the dog to him; but on smelling the beverage, Bess turned away.

"Can't do it, boys. I'd hate to set a bad example to my dog. She has good sense; you'd better follow her lead."

The men enjoyed the incident and the tired minister went to his room over the saloon, where, despite the noise, he soon fell asleep. But shortly after midnight he was awakened. The sound of breaking glass and furniture, the curses and cries of men, rang

through the house. A fight was in progress. No trivial affair this! It spoke of blood and murderous anger. Jumping into his clothing the minister rushed into the barroom. Foreman Murrey stood in the middle of the room, crazed with whiskey, his powerful frame shaking in the excitement of contest. He held a heavy chair menacingly above his head and at his feet lay three men, prostrated by the clumsy weapon. The bartender peeped from behind the counter, deathly fear in his eyes, and beyond the street door four lumberjacks, ready for further retreat, fearfully watched the victor of the battle as he waved the chair like a victorious banner.

"Canada again' the world! The Scotch an' nae ithers!" cried the drunken logger in fierce delight.

Rushing in, Higgins grabbed the foreman: "Murrey, old man, think what you're doing! Do you want to be a murderer?"

"A Hooligan struck me," the man yelled fiercely at the remembrance. "Think of a Canadian being struck by a Hooligan! It's mair nor flesh an' bluid can stan'." The foreman stepped towards the door where the enemy had retreated.

"You can't afford to become a criminal because a man lost his temper!" cried the

missionary, retaining his hold. "Put down your chair and show them that a Scotchman can control himself, even if others can't."

The appeal to nationality won. Murrey watched his friend assist the wounded, murmuring in drunken enjoyment, "The Scotch an' nae ithers!" The men in the street wisely remained outside until the minister led Murrey up-stairs. Then Higgins put the fighting foreman to bed and lay down beside him, only to be awakened by oaths, screams, and the crashing blows of an ax on a near-by door. The minister rushed into the hall to find the owner of the saloon battering down the door of his wife's room and swearing in his drunken rage that he would kill her. The proprietor had spent the previous afternoon disreputably. His wife had followed him and had failed in her attempt to bring him home. Now, under the spell of liquor, his offended dignity sought solace in murder. Aided by the bartender, Higgins disarmed the saloon-keeper, led him off to bed and remained until sleep held him fast.

The next day was the Sabbath. After breakfast, the preacher placed his phonograph on the roulette wheel and "Rock of Ages" floated through the rum-ladened atmosphere. The crowd of loungers increased. When

"Where is My Wandering Boy To-night?" came to a close, the company was in receptive mood for the searching heart-to-heart talk that followed. While this strange service continued the proprietor refused all requests for drinks and at its close asked Mr. Higgins to pray for him.

Shortly after the affray in the saloon, the Sky Pilot visited the camp over which Murrey was foreman. It was time for the annual offering, but Mr. Higgins learned that the Sisters of Charity had solicited the crew for hospital work that day and he decided to defer the request until his next visit. After service he said: "It was my intention to ask for the yearly offering to the mission work to-night, but since the Sisters have canvassed the camp to-day I will not ask your assistance until later." The preacher had scarcely finished the announcement when Murrey, the foreman, sprang to his feet.

"Sit doon, Pilot!" he said. "You dinna need to ask ony collection in this shanty. We ken a guid thing an' are willin' to pay for't. I'll tak' up the collection, though it's a new job to me. Shell oot, lads; remember the Lord and Murrey love a cheerfu' giver."

Murrey completed his self-imposed task

and handed the missionary forty-seven dollars and fifty cents.

The Master's years were full of ministerings—helpful touches, lightened burdens, lifts and gifts of kind assistance. The world admires these and watches their reappearance in His followers. In the city we hope for Christlike help but do not ask for it—having often been disappointed. In the woods the jacks unsophisticatedly hold to the principle that when a man professes Christ he should "deliver the goods or freeze up his spiel." Not a bad idea after all! And that was why Paddy's chum came to the missionary.

"Pilot," said he, "I've got a bunky in that booze-joint over there, an' the fool is blowin' his stake as fast as he can throw it. I can't land him and if I tried the barkeep would give me a hunch with his boot. Give me a lift."

"Lead on," said the preacher. "We'll try it together."

In the saloon the crowd mirthfully gorged itself with burning liquors. It was a wedding of drink and riot. Inflamed passion stamped its feet joyfully and the care of winter disappeared in the wash of intoxicants. Paddy, for whom Higgins sought, led the spenders, his liberality knowing neither bounds nor

distinctions. He staggered to the bar in drunken ecstasy: "Bung-swatter, load up the house! Hell while the dough lasts! Turn the spicket; give us a bath!" Paddy generously emptied his pockets on the metal counter. A roll of bills and a handful of silver were offered in sacrifice. The bartender, as high priest of Bacchus, stepped forward to receive the free-will offering, but the hand of Higgins arrived first and covered the roll of bills.

"I'll take this for my treat, Paddy," said the preacher in quiet, decisive tone.

"No you don't!" cried the furious bartender, rushing to attack the intruder.

"Stand back!" commanded Higgins.

The bartender paused. The air was electric. The drinks stood on the bar untasted. All interest centred in the preacher and bartender. Then the drink-seller grabbed a cudgel and advanced with upraised arm, followed by several drinkers.

"Cut it out, you fools!" cried a big lumberjack who sprang to the assistance of the missionary. "This is the Pilot, the friend of every lumberjack. The guy that tackles him takes me on and some others."

The bartender suddenly lost his aggressiveness.

"Paddy has had too much," said Higgins, putting his arm around the generous drunk. "The silver there is enough to treat you all. I'll keep the rest as Paddy's banker. It's his when he sobers up." Turning to the drink-mixer: "You call yourself a man and take money from a fellow who isn't in his right mind? Bah! You're a scoundrel or you would have sent this fellow away long ago. Your whole ilk are leeches and blood-suckers." Higgins led Paddy out and took him to Bemidji where he put him to bed.

Next morning Paddy wandered into the hotel lobby where he found the preacher. "Somebody went through me last night, Mr. Higgins," he began; "they cleaned me out o' every cent and pinched me hat an' coat. I'm up again' it! What am I goin' to do?"

"Go home. That's what you're going to do," said the preacher with decision. "Robbed you, did they? Nobody needed to rob you. It couldn't be done, Paddy. When I met you last night you were throwing your money away faster than they could take it from you. You had already lost your coat and you threw your hat out of the car window on the way here."

Paddy hung his head—he had been there before.

"But we saved a little for you—enough to get you back home. Here is the roll that's left. Buy a ticket and start homeward is my advice."

"I wish you had run onto me sooner," Paddy said, sorrowfully, as he looked at the money.

Paddy came of a good family, his brother being a prominent Catholic priest. He took the advice of his friend and left the woods, never more appearing among his old associates.

The proverb, "A man is known by the company he keeps," is true in the main, but not always applicable. A camp chaplain associates more with sinners than with saints: he is a friend to the unnice, a brother to the unwashed, yet different from his company in manner and morals. Higgins and Smith travelled together; but it would be unfair to judge either by the other. Here is the story—a story well known in the logging district of Minnesota: Smith was one of the best. He did things and looked the part. Physically, "none better in the North woods" was the verdict of the men who worked under him. His ability to master problems had won recognition, but he was feared because

of his vicious habits—another case of what whiskey can do with a man.

Once when Higgins preached in Smith's camp, Smith came to the meeting and drunkenly listened to the sermon. A tense stillness filled the place, for the audience was in sympathy with the earnest preacher.

Suddenly another voice broke into the harmony. It was Smith, yelling blasphemous encouragement:

"Lace it to them, Higgins. Give them blazes, old boy! The dogs need a dose of religion to make them log right."

"Don't notice him, boys," said Higgins; "that's whiskey that's talking. Whiskey isn't ashamed of anything."

At the end of Frank Higgins' first year in Bemidji, when the camps poured their human flood into the settlements, he visited the little village of Farley, Minnesota. The lumberjacks were taking the town apart. The drought was turned into a deluge. Coin streamed over the bar; a tide of liquor returned, and every mother's son felt equal to ten and acted accordingly. On the corner a group of lumberjacks, apparently well pleased with their amusement, attracted the preacher's attention. They were joyfully watching a human giant who wallowed in the mud

with hog-like abandon. It was Foreman Smith, too drunk to know or care. Higgins dragged the poor fellow from his muddy bed, leaned him against a building and scraped the filth from his garments with a shovel.

Smith's father and brother-in-law were trading in Farley that day, and they begged the preacher to take Smith to the Keeley Cure in Minneapolis, two hundred miles distant. They could be of no assistance in this, for Smith had previously severed all connection with his relatives, and for two years he had not visited them, although seldom far from home. Higgins had no desire for the task; but it promised, at least, a partial reformation, and any improvement would be worth while. To accomplish the journey with his unwilling patient it would be necessary to keep the man drunk. So the minister packed his grip with whiskey—rather unministerial baggage—hoping to beat the devil with his first lieutenant. On the train when the conductor called for the tickets he found Higgins soothing the foreman with the bottle and laughingly questioned:

"On your way to Presbytery with a lay delegate? Or are you bound for the distillers' convention?"

Woodsmen, on their way to the city, packed the smoking car, a drunken company. Smith's fighting proclivities ran high and the ever present bottle alone kept him from "stirring up the animals."

"It was the only time I tended bar all day," said Higgins; "and I'm not anxious to repeat."

The sweltering car was in a sanitary way unbearable and drove the missionary to the day coach for cleaner breathing, where he visited with Smith's father, who dared not approach his son. But before leaving the smoker Higgins had installed a teamster as bartender to his demanding charge. But he had not counted all the possibilities when he pressed the teamster into service. The substitute bartender had imbibed a little before entering the train, and, being a frugal soul, drank deeply of the free whiskey at hand. The mixed drinks produced rapture, and the happy jack lifted his voice in song. It was the day following St. Patrick's Day; and a company of loyal Irishmen lounged on the depot platform at Walker, the green ribbons of yesterday's celebration still on their coats. The tipsy teamster was an Orangeman and the green decorations awakened his befuddled brain to visions of the glorious London-

derry days where feasts and fights were a part of all celebrations.

Balancing on his belt buckle, he leaned far out of the window and began the soul-stirring song, " Protestant Boys." It raised his green rosetted auditors to enthusiasm. History repeated itself. A stout blow drove the singer across the car, jammed him between the seats and hushed his maudlin melody. Pandemonium broke loose. The attempts of the drunken passengers to assist the Orangeman to his feet resulted in a round of fights.

" Come into the smoker quick ! " cried the conductor, hurrying to Higgins. " Come and take care of your parishioners. We can't handle that booze-soaked crew."

Higgins found the teamster so wedged in between the seats that his best efforts to extricate him were fruitless. Finally, Smith, disgusted with the ineffectual attempts of the others, grabbed the waving legs and with one jerk, damaging alike to teamster and seats, yanked the Orangeman from his temporary prison.

At Brainard they changed cars and waited two hours for the Minneapolis train. Smith immediately made his arrival known, and the station-master drove Higgins and his charge out of the waiting-room, for the logger's

abusive hilarity threatened to wreck the building. Next an officer ordered them off the streets; and when they had retreated to a saloon Smith's billingsgate secured them a hasty ejection. The foreman's temper was rising high. As he dragged the husky preacher up the street he consigned the whole town to the furnace room of the universe, which, for their special benefit, was to be heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. An officer approached to arrest the disturbers; but he recognized Higgins, and, on hearing his story, placed the police station at his disposal until the south-bound train was due.

When Smith realized that he was in the police station his anger knew no bounds. He rushed at his companion with closed fist. But Higgins, anticipating the attack, stepped deftly aside. The heavy blow split the door panel and left Smith with a badly bruised hand. The eventful journey finally ended and the woodsman entered the rest room of the Keeley Institute just as the bell signalled the patients to prepare for treatment. The inmates removed their coats and rolled up their sleeves so that the injection could be administered. This coat-removing pleased Smith. It savoured of a fight; so he quickly

doffed his own, and with raised guard staggeringly advanced to battle. But the patients had fallen into line and were marching past the doctor. Instead of the fight Smith received the initial treatment.

Several years have passed since this incident occurred. Smith is still a sober man, respected for his ability and honoured and trusted by his employers, who have placed large interests in his hands. Having known the degradation of drink he is a strong advocate of temperance.

Near Tenstrike worked a French Canadian, whom, for obvious reasons, we shall call "Old Quebec." This lumberjack was neither a wise man nor a fool; neither was he commonplace. There was no uncertainty about his prejudices; he was satisfied to violently oppose or loyally assist. What he admired he unreservedly supported; what he hated he unreservedly cursed. Well, he cursed the Sky Pilot in lurid language unforgetably unique. "Old Quebec" was not religious; far from it—but if a man professed spiritual relationship that allegiance must link itself to the Catholic Church or "Old Quebec" would not tolerate the advocate. If you had asked him: "Isn't this prej-

udice?" he would have sworn you out of countenance, thus satisfying himself and silencing you. And when the Rev. F. E. Higgins came to camp, "Old Quebec" thought him a fool because religious and a knave because a Protestant.

At the missionary's first meeting, "Old Quebec" was the "bull in the china shop." He poured his torrent of blasphemy, invective and abuse upon the minister, shocking every decent man in the camp. When asked to allow others the privilege of worshipping he shook his fist under the speaker's nose. There are some whom one cannot eject. "Old Quebec" probably belonged to this class; at least Higgins avoided a test. So there were two speakers at the meeting that evening, and Mr. Higgins, being more accustomed to public address, won out. However, after the benediction he did not wait to collect his hymn-books, but retired to the office.

"I had held a meeting," said Higgins, "and had not been driven out by the Frenchman. I was satisfied to let it go at that."

One cold Sunday night Higgins stopped at the hotel in Tenstrike and before retiring visited the barn to care for his dog team. The yard was littered with cakes of ice, the

ice-house being in process of filling, and as he picked his way between the cakes he stumbled over the body of a man. Higgins felt for evidences of life. The body was cold and motionless. Rushing into the barroom he called for assistance. "Old Quebec," about to start for the camp, sat on the end of the bar, swinging a lantern between his legs.

"Hurry, Quebec!" cried Higgins; "bring your lantern and help me. There's a dead or dying man lying out among the ice."

"Old Quebec" slid down from the counter and hurried into the yard with the Protestant preacher.

"Take hold of his feet, Quebec," directed Higgins.

But the Frenchman had no desire to touch a dead body. "You can carry him," he said. "I'll light the way."

Fortunately the man still lived. He was drunk and frozen and the timely aid alone saved his life. While Higgins worked over the unconscious man, Quebec, on his stool, silently swung the lighted lantern between his legs and watched every move.

"This fellow will need to stay here a few days," said Higgins to the hotel keeper. "He has no money. Charge the bill to me."

Shortly afterwards the Sky Pilot again visited "Old Quebec's" camp. The Frenchman sat in a prominent place—silent.

"Suppose Quebec's waitin' till the preachin' before he butts in," whispered one of the boys to a neighbour.

The sermon began. Through it all the Frenchman listened attentively. It was the first undisturbed service that the camp had known.

"What's the matter with the Frenchman to-night?" asked the minister. "Is the fellow sick? This meeting has been a quiet affair."

"Old Quebec" caught the minister's eye and beckoned him. "How's our man, Higgins?" he inquired.

"Oh, he's all right!" replied the amazed preacher.

"There it is, Pilot," said the Frenchman extending his hand; "that's yours now. Will you shake it?" The men warmly shook hands while the camp burst into cheers and slapped them on the back. "I've been pretty rough on you, Mr. Higgins. I ain't got much time for religion; but after what I saw that Sunday night in Tenstrike, I'm settled. You're willin' to do for us poor fools what we ain't got sense enough to do

for ourselves. Anythin' I can do for you, Pilot, I'll do. I'm with you. Shake again."

The hate of "Old Quebec" has turned to strong, helpful friendship. As a contrast to the past he now feels responsible for the camp decorum. Woe be to the jack who dares to interfere with a Higgins meeting when that Frenchman is present. In many ways he has shown his desire to recompense. Once in Bemidji a group of lumberjacks blocked the sidewalk. "Old Quebec" saw Higgins approaching and waded into the gang casting them right and left. "Open up the road for the Pilot," he cried. "He's made easy sleddin' for many a one of us and I'll road-monkey for him."

Faith cometh by hearing. "Old Quebec's" chances are bettered; for the word of God is like leaven.

XI

THE RIVER PIGS

THE call of spring opens the lakes and rivers; and the burdened ice drops its mass of logs into the released waters. During the winter, millions of logs have been landed on the ice, until the lakes resemble a deep plowed field and the rivers have lost their high banks. Thousands of the campmen engage for the drive, following the winding streams for months after the winter camps are closed. These picturesque rivermen, "water hogs," "river pigs"—call them what you will; they are not sensitive in the matter of names—are the brave, daring, reckless fellows who pilot the winter's cut to the distant sawmills. Their life is adventurous, warped and woofed with danger, brimful of exposure and hard beyond belief. A misstep from a floating log carries many menaces: a ducking in the icy stream, a crushed limb between the moving timbers or a grave beneath the logs that quickly close above the submerged.

Where the stream is rapid, only alertness keeps the logs from jamming. If the prog-

A MISSTEP FROM A FLOATING LOG CARRIES MANY MENACES.

ress is impeded the oncoming rear crowds the floating timbers into a mass confused and compact. The grinding logs groan with the weight behind them ; huge timbers are splintered and broken in the crush. It requires picked men to find the key log and to loosen it. Only the brave will face the piled-up death ; only a trained, skillful riverman can make his way to shore when the released logs, twisting and bursting, rush down the stream. When the jam breaks the workman jumps from log to log, like a pursued squirrel, taking them as they come with incredible swiftness. Many a poor jack has gone down, crushed to death when the logs have suddenly started ; and his body, discovered days afterwards, has borne little resemblance to human form. Where human ingenuity and strength are unable to find and remove the key log dynamite is called into the game.

The more hazardous the calling, the more reckless become the workers. Foolhardy deeds are common. Without a thought of danger, the drivers often ride the logs through rapids that sing a song of death. At Hell's Gate, on Kettle River, while Higgins was out with Martin Cain's crew of drivers, two men drove the batteau through the rapids, contrary to orders, with the result

that the boat was smashed to splinters and its contents lost; the men themselves, when almost exhausted, were rescued with the greatest difficulty. And it was with the river pigs that Higgins first began his preaching to the foresters. His interest has remained with these daring men. The drive is interesting but is not the best place for mission work. Meetings are all held in the open and weather conditions often make a service impossible. The long hours of labour exhaust the rivermen so that they drop to sleep as soon as they return from the stream and the mosquitoes, plenteous in the North woods, disturb the thought and make conviction impossible.

The missionary's help is mostly given to the rivermen on their arrival in town after the drive. They are ready for a rapid spree and need a sober head and kindly hand to save them from themselves and the temptations of the town.

The drive was in. The river pigs were painting the town red. For the sake of law and order a few of them were thrown into the lockup for its sobering effect. One of the boys, on awakening in the morning, found himself behind the barred doors and immediately sent for Mr. Higgins to plead his case

with the justice. Higgins asked the justice to let the man off as lightly as possible, but to give him a thorough reprimand. The judge was a good friend of the missionary; but at the time of the trial he could not be described as sober. He was able to sit up, though that taxed all his powers to the limit. Calling the prisoner before him the judge began:

"Whiskey is-s a bad thing. It ma-akes a f-fool of an h-honest man an' a blank f-fool of a fool. Therefore—therefore—it s-shouldn't b-be t-touched by l-lumberjacks. It ma-akes a f-fool of everybody t-that t-touches it. If you don't believe it, j-just l-look at the j-judge who has the p-power of sen-sentencing you. S-see w-what w-whiskey has done for me. B-because of my f-friend Higgins I'll let you off t-this t-time; but re-remember the judge, and let w-whiskey alone. Dis-dismissed!"

Solomon could not have chosen a more apt illustration, and the river pig appreciated the force of the example. Taking the missionary with him to a hotel, he drew off his boots and extracted a roll of bills containing one hundred and fifty dollars. "If the blood-suckers who made me drunk," he said, "had known I had this they would have robbed me of it, as they did of my loose change, before they

drove me into the street. I'm through, Pilot—I'm through with the liquor." The man went to North Dakota, settled on a farm and to-day owns three hundred and twenty acres of good land.

Funerals are usually sad and solemn affairs. Not so the one that Higgins conducted over a poor riverman who had met his death the last day of the drive. The missionary was walking down the main street of the village when a drunken river pig approached and hailed him: "Say, Pilot, one of the bunch fell off a log, pulled the hole in after him and is at the coffin-shop ready for the bone-yard. We want him planted like a decent Christian; he weren't no squaw man. See to the trimmin', will you? Do the job right if you've got to buy out every wannigan in town. Are you on, Pilot? The crew's at Blank's saloon. Call for us; we want to go with you to Jim's bunkin' place."

Higgins went to the undertaker's and had the body placed in a plain pine coffin, secured a dray and drove up to Blank's saloon for the boys. Out on the sidewalk the river pigs came noisily; but when they saw the dray and the plain pine coffin they stopped abruptly.

"It's no go, Pilot," said the one who had spoken to the minister; "this is no jack-pine farmer's funeral. We're no cheap skates. This crew has money an' intends to blow it. Give us a run for it."

Then another rum-soaked river pig spoke up:

"If this was a tin-horn gambler or a bloated saloon-keeper they'd have a hearse an' a band. Jim's only a river pig but he's got to be planted with the frills just the same."

"Get a decent box an' hearse an' carriages an' call again," they shouted as they backed into the saloon.

It was a more imposing procession that stopped at Blank's saloon an hour later. A hearse and six carriages completed the cortège. The mourners also had changed to a state where feelings of the sublime and ridiculous blend to produce an incongruity.

"This is the way to do it," cried a river pig viewing the hearse and carriages. "Wouldn't Jim be tickled to death to see this show an' to be the whole blank thing?"

"Say, Pilot," said one as Higgins helped him into the carriage, "when we meet Jim later he'll say, 'I'm proud o' the way you fellows rid me out o' town.'"

"Pretty nigh two months' wages gone for

a box; but what's expense when we're plantin' Jim?" weepingly commented Jim's bunkmate. "He'd 'a' done as much for me if I'd 'a' give him a chance. It's his last blow-out anyway."

All the way to the cemetery the mourners continued to express their satisfaction over the "frills" of the obsequies. There was an undertone of complaint, however, because poor drowned Jim could not personally thank them for the honour conferred. At the grave it looked as if more than Jim were going to occupy it; for with difficulty the drunken men were restrained from tumbling in on the casket. The minister spoke a few words on the uncertainty of life and the need of the preparation for the future, but the address had many interruptions from the weeping attendants with their interjected praises for the dead.

"Speak a good word for Jim, Pilot. Tell the Lord he could ride a log as well as the best of us."

"Get him through, if you can; he wasn't so bad."

"Good-bye, Jim! Our turn's comin'."

The last words were said; the minister turned to leave. "Hold on there!" cried the foreman. "This is no pauper you

buried, but a man whose friends aren't broke." Taking off his hat, the foreman turned to the crew. "Shell out, you pigs!" he cried. "Jim's been planted O. K. Now pay for the words the Sky Pilot shed over his bones. This is no poor-farm job."

The boys responded with a liberal collection for the pastor's services.

XII

THE CAMP-JUMPERS

THE northern night was hastening to the forest and we to a near-by camp. It was cold—bitter cold. The mercury at the hotel registered twenty-five below zero when we left town and it was probably huddled at the bottom now. Through the fairy forest, ice-bound, snow-covered, we passed as rapidly as our primitive locomotion would permit, momentarily glancing at the ever-changing pictures, crystallized by frost, diamond-spangled by the setting sun; but despite the beauteous landscape, we wished for the heavily loaded stove of the bunk house.

"Glorious weather for logging!" called the Sky Pilot over his shoulder; "if this keeps up the swamp roads will hold and they'll land the whole cut."

It was too cold for optimistic thoughts and I looked anxiously for the blue smoke of the cook-shack to announce the end of the journey.

As we sighted camp, a young lumberjack emerged, his pack on his back.

"GLORIOUS WEATHER FOR LOGGING."

"Jumped your job?" Higgins asked the young traveller.

"I'm hittin' the trail. Want a change," replied the woodsman.

"Want a drink, isn't it?" burst out the preacher, looking him straight in the eyes. "Your hide's cracking! Admit it!"

"Maybe," said the jack shamefacedly; "but I won't go in soak this time, Pilot. I'm on."

"You're on, eh?" indignantly came from the minister. "You're off, I tell you! What is there in town for you but drink? They cleaned you out last time, boy, and they'll do it again if they get one drink into you. Leave it strictly alone, Bill." The Pilot's hand rested on the boy's shoulder.

"It's good advice, and I'll try to take it."

"Good-bye, my boy. I'll pray for you; but it's no use unless you give yourself a lift." As we walked into the camp clearing he added: "I wish I were in town to see Bill through. That dirty bunch back there will load him full, clean every cent out of him and then toss the poor fellow into the snake room to sleep off the booze." Higgins stopped and gazed after the figure now far down the road. "And some preachers say there is no hell." He was thinking aloud. "I know

there is; and so do the lumberjacks. There *must* be one for the fellows who damn these big-hearted chaps who want to do better but haven't the will to make the grade—for the fellows who turn the lumberjacks from sobriety to drunkenness and make many good workmen into worthless camp-jumpers."

The greatest trouble with which the loggers have to contend is "camp-jumping." So far no adequate cause for it has been found and no tried method successfully represses it. The camp-jumper is irresponsible, ungovernable; the old Presbyterian doctrine of Total Depravity is unqualifiedly accepted by the proprietors as the only explanation that comes within a mile of explaining him. The contractor's task is to keep a competent crew. He has one crew coming, another working and a third leaving. This is loss to employer and employee; but that never worries the employee. A jobber thus described the situation: "The jacks work until their hides begin to crack, follow their tongues to the nearest irrigation plant and tank up until the stake is gone. Then they mosey into camp to dry out again. It's an endless chain affair." It might be suggested that if the camps had a few more comforts, an added

chance for cleanliness and some provision for an occasional bath, the men might not prove so restless and the glitter of the saloons prove less attractive.

It takes little to amuse jack; it takes less to make him jump his job. He does not complain when affairs are not to his taste: he walks into the office, demands his wages and "hits the trail." Ofttimes a whole camp will "jump" on the slightest provocation. Resentment does not enter into the transaction. The outgoing lumberjack may meet one coming in but rarely will he suggest anything detrimental to the camp. Even where a whole crew jumps there is no interference with the logger's attempt to secure a new gang. Camp-jumping is purely an individual affair: unionism has not entered the lumber district. One man, being a little late for breakfast, found the pancakes all gone. He immediately went to the clerk and demanded his wages. Here is another case: Jack Olson was ready to leave camp—just because he wanted to—so he entered the office and demanded the amount due him. But it was an off day with the clerk who tossed the little Norwegian out and went on with his newspaper.

Against such generous violence little Olson

could not retaliate. He waited until his husky bunkmate returned from the works.

"The bloat wouldn't give you your stake, hey?" asked bunky.

"Ya; an' Ay ban kacked out," explained Olson.

Bunky was interested. His eyes twinkled. "Come on, John, old boy!" he said affectionately, taking Olson by the waist. "Come on and watch the free show." Arriving at the office bunky entered it with a jar. "Sit down there, John, in that reserved seat, while I raise the asbestos curtain and turn on the red fire." Stepping close to the clerk, Olson's bunkmate shook a monstrous fist under the nose of the astonished time-keeper, and said: "Are you the guy that splashes ink? Then sprinkle out my walk. Sprinkle one for Olson, too. Squirt fast, or this little shack will look like Hades upset." Without comment the "guy" grabbed his pen and the "walks" were "sprinkled out" in record time. Bunky and Olson left the camp like victorious generals and celebrated the event by blowing their entire stake before the night closed.

I had returned to the office after a walk around the clearing. "What are those men

doing in the bunk house at this time of the day?" I asked the clerk.

"Camp inspectors," replied Erickson.

"Camp inspectors!" incredulously; "they're hardly fit representatives of the state of Minnesota. They look like ordinary lumberjacks."

Erickson enjoyed my ignorance. "They're not official, only individual. They're fellows who pass from camp to camp, work a day or two if things suit them, and then move on to another camp, like birds of passage."

This led to a discussion on camp-jumping in which all the office force joined.

"This camp aims to keep one hundred and sixty men at work," said the clerk. "How many do you suppose we've had since the middle of October?" It was then the last of January.

"Five hundred," I guessed.

"I booked the eight hundred and seventy-fifth this morning; and we treat our men better than they do in most camps."

"Seventy men left the week before Christmas," added the superintendent. "They were booze-hoisters, every man of them."

"That's better luck than they're havin' at Cavin's Camp," remarked the scaler, naming a camp we had visited the day before.

"They lost seventy-eight in one week because of a poor cook. They had a hot time of it—had nine cooks in seven days. That's goin' some!"

"The men are rovers, travelling men without jobs." It was the lineman who made the remark. "They kick on the grub an' it's as good as they'd get at a two-dollar-a-day hotel. In town they live like hogs, an' hit the back doors for a handout. The grub's an excuse when some other excuse ain't handy."

While the discussion progressed, I idly turned the pages of the *Duluth News Tribune* and noticed an item descriptive of one contractor's troubles with the camp-jumpers. I read aloud: "In his camp on the Duluth and Iron Range, the gang has been maintained at an average of sixty-five, but in doing that no less than six hundred and ninety odd names figure on the pay rolls since they began to operate last October. Somewhere around a dozen only of the gang have been on steadily. Nowadays a large proportion of the lumberjacks work perhaps for half a month and then go to the office for their time, apparently with an itching to come to town to blow it."

"No exaggeration there," commented one. The others agreed.

"Some of the jacks are never in a camp more than a week," volunteered the "straw push," who had said little because it was difficult for him to talk without swearing, and with two ministers present he felt somewhat restrained.

The remark reminded Higgins of old Ben Ashley:

"I met Ben in Camp 1 on the Deer River Line and he asked me how many camps I had preached in this winter. I said about forty. 'Oh, that's nothing,' replied Ben. 'I've worked in that many myself this year.'"

The lineman, a droll old chap, spoke up: "I know Ben. He says, 'A settin' hen never grows fat.' An' I says to him, 'But she accomplishes somethin'.' Ben never stays in a place long enough to find the time o' day."

"It isn't the grub that's at fault," said the walking boss, bringing the discussion back to a consideration of causes. "The Oliver Mining Company treat their men exceptionally well and they have as much trouble as the rest."

"It's a habit and an appetite," said a man on the other side of the stove; "it's a habit, that's what it is."

"Sure it's a habit," agreed the lineman. "You know Gunny Sack Kane? He's worked for every logger on the Range. Hardly a camp this side o' the Dominion he hasn't slept in. Well, Crawley, the push, saw Gunny Sack in Duluth dressed up in Uncle Sam's army uniform. Gunny had enlisted.

"'They've got you at last where you won't jump your job,' Crawley said to him.

"'Oh, I dunno about that,' says Gunny. 'I'll be back to work for you again this fall.' An' true enough, Gunny turns up accordin' to his yearly schedule."

"Duluth is said to be one of the best recruiting points," remarked the clerk; "and the recruits are mostly lumberjacks. That may account for some desertions."

"Why do they jump most when the wages are best?" asked the scaler.

"More money for booze in a shorter time," the straw push explained.

"The employment agencies are partly to blame," said the walking boss, as he lit his pipe. "They advertise higher wages elsewhere, and the lumberjacks hike to town for the easy money. The agent collects a dollar for each job, sends the men to a camp where the foreman is in the game, and the foreman sets them to work at lower wages than they

expected. They work a few days to get a stake, then jump again. Their wages are cut because they leave before the month is out and the logger and agent are both ahead. The agency gets him another job for another dollar—it's a merry-go-round with the jacks paying the piper."

"Doesn't the law protect the men?" I asked.

"Yes; but the men know they have no protection from the shyster lawyers, and seldom sue."

"I know one agency," remarked the lineman, laughing at the recollection, "that shipped a crew o' jacks into North Dakota to cut railroad ties; an' there ain't a forest in the whole bloomin' state. That agency stole its own oats; for the state revoked its license. The foreigners are an ignorant bunch anyway."

"You may talk about the foreigners all you like, but these books show that the white (English speaking) men are the worst camp-jumpers we have." The clerk tapped the time-books.

The talk continued. Many theories were presented: drink, women, shiftlessness, lack of ambition, the cupidity of the employment agencies, the rascality of the employers—all

these and others received mention—and while we talked a lumberjack entered the office, demanded his time and left without volunteering a reason for jumping his job.

XIII

"EASY MONEY"

THE saloon has not neglected this thirsty field; its "irrigating projects" are everywhere. The priests of the goddess of chance, moreover, have built convenient sanctuaries where the luckless worshippers may impoverish themselves; and other vices flourish. The verdict of those who ought to know is that about eighty per cent. of the lumberjacks part with their wages in the saloons, gambling dens and more vicious haunts. One camp foreman, an Irishman, gave the following opinion with the air of a statistician: "Well, to be conservative, I would place the percentage of those who blow their stakes as soon as they hit town at ninety-nine and then some."

The attitude of the men towards saving money is well set forth in this little story: Sam was a camp cook, earning eighty-five dollars a month, with no one to support but himself.

"I've punched dough for twenty-three

years now," said he. "I've earned lots o' good money an' never blew it foolish."

"Then you are well-to-do?"

"Not exactly that—John D. an' me ain't pards yet. I mean, I get the best for my money. Last year I went down river with nearly five hundred of the clear coin and only wasted a dollar an' a half o' the whole stake."

"For whiskey?"

"No. I paid fifty cents for a hat an' a dollar for rubbers. That's all I wasted."

"Then you banked the rest of your wages?"

"Banked! No, I barred it! Blew it in havin' a good time—the biggest two days I ever had."

Many a man has passed thirty to forty years in the camps and has not a cent to show for his labours. The money was not spent on wife and family, for most of the men are single; little went for food, for board is provided. Tim Doney, for example, entered a hotel in Tenstrike to wait for the train going south. Tim had finished his winter's work and had the wages to show for it. The saloon men tried to ensnare him but he resisted their wiles and left the village with his check uncashed. When the runners learned that he

was bound for Bemidji they wired the gamblers at that place to meet him. A "toot," genial and sympathetic, greeted him as he stepped off the train. The new comrade acted like an old friend. To cement the relationship, of course, one must treat and the other do likewise. The end was already in sight. While they drank an attendant made music with the flying roulette ball. Its siren song seduced. Tim lost in a few hours the wages of a long winter.

The leeches are not in the saloon business for their health; "it takes more than pine breezes to pay expenses." Through the easily obtained by-products many a dive-keeper has placed himself above want. It is part of this benevolent system to "short change" and "roll" the drunks, thus removing temptation, continuous while the money lasts, to protracted drinking and debauchery. This is doing evil (with a vengeance) that good may come—a beautiful moral argument for pocket-picking. The beginning and end of the saloon is to make money. It deals in depravity, dulls the finer senses and reduces the moral distinctions of those who live by it.

What mattered it to the rum-sellers that Colin Campbell's old mother had not seen him for nineteen long years? If they could

get his cash she could wait another nineteen. Colin had tried all these years to return to her; but he felt that he could not go unless he was well clothed and apparently prosperous, and the saloons had kept him reduced to a working suit. Each year he happily left the camps with wages intact.

"I'm goin' home to see her," he told his employers. "She's gettin' old now. She'll be glad to see me an' I'll stay with her all summer. Good-bye—till fall."

But Colin got no farther than the city of Duluth. He stopped there each spring to wash up and have one little drink. He intended to take only one, just one; but somehow—he could not explain it—he was not able to stop as long as he had money. When he sobered up he wrote the mother, telling her it was impossible to make the trip this year, then turned wearily back to the old logging firm to work another twelve months and hope for better things.

This had gone on for years. At the end of the nineteenth season, Scott, the superintendent of the company for which Colin worked, took the affair in his own hands.

"You're going home this year, Colin. You're going to see the mother."

"If I can get through Duluth!" replied

Colin with the bitter memory of past defeats crowding his mind.

"You're going this year all right, my boy," said the superintendent. "It's about time she saw you—and I'm sure she will. You get no cash this time. I've bought your ticket to Montreal and some clothes; and when you get home the year's wages will be waiting for you there. Now good-bye. Remember me to the mother."

Colin Campbell saw the mother. After nineteen years of waiting they spent a happy summer together.

The possessor of pampered appetite is an easy prey. An abounding thirst leaps the barriers of common sense, derides prejudice and grasps the forbidden regardless of consequences. Even in the camps desire is master. Moonlight Bill Hagen had cultivated his appetite until his principal vocation was to serve it. Bill was always thirsty. He welcomed joyfully anything containing alcohol. The winter was the dry season to him, as it is to many others; and he knew what the pangs of appetite can do to a man. He solaced himself with liniment (for external application only) and although it almost burned his "innards" out yet it "helped some" and

he declared, "I feel it doin' me good." Moonlight was barn boss; and during a particularly dry spell he discovered that spirits of nitre (kept as a horse medicine) had power to assuage the loud internal longings. There were two quarts at hand and Bill went on a great spree. Unfortunately, the stuff drove him insane; and whether he ever recovered or not I have not been able to learn.

The strong box of the bank is proof against the burglar with kit and nitro-glycerine; but the toy of appetite opens it at pleasure. Jack was a thrifty soul—his patched trousers and old hat confirmed the statement. At the end of the logging season he deposited his money in the bank and told the boys of his new plan to keep it beyond the reach of the saloons. "I've got the cash skidded," said he, "where it's safe from the 'toots and tinhorns.'" Jack had reserved a five dollar bill for celebration purposes and entered the saloon with the happy consciousness of a surplus for rainy days. But he had many friends; the five did not go far enough; it did not even quench his long thirst or rinse the taste of the pine from his throat. So he went to the bank and presented a check for another five dollars: this would surely "liquidate the drought."

The spirits ran high, animal and vegetable;

and Jack, waving his bank-book over the drinking crowd, proclaimed himself the peer of any Wall Street magnate. In his exuberance he visited the bank again and again, never drawing more than five dollars—drunken Jack was crafty and would not trust the bartenders with his checks. Before the bank closed he had visited the establishment so often that the cashier declared the new account a nuisance, handed him his balance and invited him to bank elsewhere. When morning looked down the rear alley Jack was sleeping off his liquor and his pockets were turned wrong side out.

His appetite had been stronger than the bank.

The financial stringency caused by the lumberjacks' absence comes to a sudden end when the camps break up in the spring. A bumper crop of dollars is quickly garnered by means of whiskey, short change, no change, the games and women. This is the hour for action; the woodsmen are without will in the face of the marshalled temptations. But the picture is not all sombre; some have conquered through the human and divine help which has come into their lives. While Mr. Higgins lived in Bemidji an old lumberjack—Johnson is as convenient a name as

any—came directly from the camps to the minister's home.

"Mr. Higgins, I've come to 'Robber's Roost' to get cleaned out again," began old man Johnson. "They've cleaned me out every year an' they'll do it again. I'm gettin' old, but I can't keep my money."

"How much have you?" asked the big missionary.

"Two hundred and seventy-five dollars," replied the old man; "but I won't have a cent in the mornin'—not a cent to show. They'll go through me for it all."

The old man sat by the fire, his head in his hands. Down the weather-beaten cheeks great tears made their furrowed course and his strong frame shook with grief.

"You will have every cent of it," answered the minister. "I'll run the game this time. I'll fix it for the gamblers; but it will be straight for you. Hand over your cash—every cent of it. I'm your banker. You can't have the money until you're ready to place it into something permanent."

Johnson's face lit up as he handed his wages to the minister. "Glory be! We've done it, Higgins. I've made a safe landin'. Logs all in, contract filled—the first time in years."

While the old man rejoiced in his new safeguard a "runner" from one of the saloons knocked at the door and inquired for the lumberjack.

"For what do you want him?" asked the missionary.

"I have a little business to see him about," suavely replied the man.

"Johnson has transacted all his business, Mr. Man," said the minister. "I have every cent of his cash, and your whole gang can't get it from me. Now, you blood-sucker, hike or I'll kick you off the premises! I know the game. Git!"

It was not necessary to speed the parting guest: he departed quickly and alone.

Old man Johnson looked at the minister through moist lashes. "Made a landin', Pilot, but too close for comfort."

What would we do without the broad philanthropy of the American saloon?

The wide open policy of the "easy money" towns has damned the lumberjacks; but its advocates have not escaped the virus they cultured. The townsmen digged a pit for others and fell into it themselves. The desire to profit through evil gave a semi-respectability to wrong-doing and the path of

straight business with its slower gains became more and more obscured. Respected men fell under the miasma; honoured men were seared with the pitch of association. The leaven has done its work and the generation that has followed is cursed with a tainted inheritance that unfortunately is more than a memory.

XIV

THE RED BADGE OF SHAME

WHEN a woman sins society creates an outcast; it passes quick judgment and its sentence is as kind as lynch law delicately administered by a mob. When a man sins society draws the white mantle of sweet charity over the offender and a multitude of transgressions are respectably interred. Our sympathy goes out to the erring lumberjack; the adventures of his forest life appeal and our well-wishing prayers are raised for him abundantly. To the wearers of scarlet no mitigating glamour attaches; we are repelled and for them we forget the needed prayer. The woman is a SINNER—writ large: for the man we make excuse. The lumber region is of course a favourite minting place for the woman whose trade is stigmatized. The woodsmen are rough and hardy, primitive in desire and strongly willing to reap the harvest of wishes; so our soiled sisters crowd close to the camps and in the new villages

the red fronts are seldom in the background. In some hamlets they hold the choicest locations.

These social outcasts have found spiritual friends in Frank Higgins and his assistants —almost the only real friends they have known since their descent. When sickness and death threaten, others may and do hesitate to respond to their cry for help; but these missionaries answer gladly, and minister to the craving souls. They know no distinctions when the hand of mercy is sought. One night the Pilot prayed for and instructed a poor Magdalene whose soul was fording the deep, dark waters of death; and the women of the resort drew near to listen. It was an incongruous scene, the dying woman asking release from sin, surrounded by her weeping companions dressed in the tinsel of enticement.

When Mr. Higgins was leaving an inmate drew him aside and told her sorrowful tale.

"I am near the end myself," she said; "the doctor promises me only six months more. This life has cut me down in my girlhood."

The minister held out the cheerful hope of the Gospel.

"It's not for such as me," she replied,

shaking her head. "No. I'd be ashamed to ask God to forgive me. I'll make a short six months of it. This life is hell. Hell itself can't be worse."

The following Sunday evening a message from the place begged the minister to come at once. The girl who had detained him in conversation was dying. Weary of pain and shame she had taken poison. Now in the hour of death she wanted the touch of a clean, kind hand, and desired a prayer for her sin-tired soul. The poor Pariahs turn naturally for personal aid to this big, simple-hearted minister. His keen sympathy is contagious. They know he will gladly help to reformation or calm with prayer the hour of death. The train south-bound from Black-duck was crowded with lumberjacks. A few seats ahead of the Sky Pilot sat a woman whose garb unmistakably proclaimed her calling. When she beckoned the minister to her side a knowing smile played on the faces of the passengers and coarse jests came from many mouths. But Higgins unhesitatingly took the proffered seat. This is the woman's story: she was leaving the place of her shame and did not know where to go for safety. She knew no open door save the abodes of sin. Would Higgins help her? Higgins

directed her to a refuge where the hands of Christian women were warm with welcome, where no wanderer met rebuff. Acting on his advice, assisted by a letter of introduction, she went to the city of Duluth and entered the door of hope. In that new abode she was led to the Saviour and under His influence lives a respectable life.

When the heavy hand of dread disease fell on the little son of the Master of the Segregated no clean woman entered the door to sympathize and help. The Master of the Segregated was unnice, of questionable ways and inelegant connections, but he passionately loved the little lad who tossed in fevered agony on his bed. His boy was as dear to him as is an only son to approved parents—his heart's desire, his hope in whom centred aspirations and clean ambitions. But to the home no one came with kind words to brighten the dull, dark hours of painful watching. Higgins heard of the lad's illness and entered to help and pray, not once, but many times. The boy died. Years afterwards I talked with the Master of the Segregated; and he told me the story.

"Higgins came when no one else would," he said. "I don't blame them, but I like

the real Christianity he showed. We were broken-hearted and Higgins gave us a Christian hand that lifted us up. . . . I never drink now."

"Why?" I asked.

He placed a picture of a boy in my hands. The face, bonny with health, was framed with curls; and in the eyes shone winsome laughter.

"Your boy?"

"My boy—the boy Higgins prayed for. When he was dying he said, 'Daddy, don't drink again. Good men don't drink, daddy.' I haven't since. . . . Higgins came and prayed for him," he repeated. "I like the kind of Christianity that that man has. He helps folks and doesn't ask any questions—just does his simple duty. Isn't that like your Christ?"

Whether or what I answered the Master of the Segregated, I do not remember. I was thinking of how the Nazarene dealt with a woman who was a sinner.

XV

INTO THE MOUTH OF HELL

TO the devotees of the debauch the shrines of license are open and accessible; with lurid vice and red liquor the worshippers pay their tithes to the priests and priestesses of the underworld. Exceeding excess is the consummation desired; like the blind rush of a bursting torrent they speed the carnival of folly, the Mardi Gras of iniquity. Noisy lustings drown the dread rattle of slave chains and uproarious hilarity accompanies the progress of the revel. "Hell looks like a spluttering tallow dip in a shower when the lumberjacks begin to blaze in the spring." Near the camps are the villages; in the villages dwell the spoilers. Lust and liquor solicit attention while fickle chance invites to fortune and reduces to beggary. Here vice encourages, evil welcomes and hell advertises—for sin is original, progressive, up to date and successful.

In the camps the missionary is mostly a preacher; in the lumber towns his work is

cut to no design or pattern. His tasks are unusual and unexpected; grace is mixed with riot and religion goes arm in arm with brute force. It is personal work in the broadest and narrowest sense—changing chance circumstances into Christian activity.

"You've had more than enough, Jack; time you turned in," said Mr. Higgins to a man who was drinking at the bar.

"What's it to you?" asked the angry bartender; "mind your own business."

"This is my business," replied the minister. "This fellow is too drunk to know what he is doing, so I will take care of him." The minister took the drunken man by the arm to lead him out.

"I'll see you in hell before I'll let you have him!" savagely yelled the drink-mixer, leaping over the bar to assault the missionary. But he reckoned without his host. The heavy arm of the preacher shot out and the bartender measured himself on the sawdust.

"Here's one of your own to care for!" called Higgins to the proprietor. "When your man wakes up tell him not to interfere with the cloth and its duties. I have to take care of the boys—*that's my business!*"

"Th-that's your business!" mumbled the drunken lumberjack as Higgins led him out.

"Go to the slums to see depravity," is a common remark. But the slums are relegated to the far rear when the lumberjacks and river pigs begin to scatter the coin. By midnight the "snake room" is piled deep with men lying in horror. Why attempt to describe it? It can't be done. I have a photograph of a snake room in which over fifty men are lying on the floor, sleeping off the drink and drugs. The picture was taken before midnight. A logger of repute told me of seeing over a hundred men packed in this same room, every one of them without a cent through liquor or robbery. A city missionary visited the camps and after viewing the snake rooms cried: "It is past belief! Keep at the work! Let them at least know that there is a God in Israel!"

Many a man has been picked out of the snake room by the missionaries, carried to a hotel and carefully tended while reason slowly returned. Barney was educated for the Catholic priesthood but drink had ruined him and he joined the degenerates in the woods. Higgins found him in the snake room almost buried under human flesh. For three weeks Barney had been drinking and during that time he had not changed his

clothes or even washed his hands. The Pilot carried him to a lodging-house, bathed his body and put him to bed. Higgins nursed Barney back to health, tenderly watching over him until he was able to return to camp.

Helpfulness counts. Actions such as these may not result in the desired conversion, but they reveal the spirit of Christ and are a modern commentary on the broad humanity of His teaching.

On the banks of the Galilean lake our Master, who never wearied of doing good, said to Peter: "Simon, lovest thou Me?"

"Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee," replied the fisherman.

Then the divine lips gave to Peter and to us the end and aim of Christian relationship: "Feed My sheep." Love for Him is best expressed by helping men.

"Who is that fellow?" asked a stranger who saw Higgins helping the lumberjacks in the village.

"That's the lumberjacks' Sky Pilot, who never turned a lumberjack down," said a woodsman; and added: "His job is keepin' us out of hell."

It was crudely but reverently expressed and told of a Christianity that acts.

"Here, Dan, you're too drunk to deal

with these sober sharpers. Hand over your pile. You don't know whether you're winning or losing."

"You're right, Pilot," answered the drunken lumberjack, who was playing roulette, "you're always right. Put me to bed."

Nineteen dollars was all Dan had left. Higgins put him to bed and returned to the saloons to aid other prodigals. Shortly afterwards a "runner" called on Dan and induced him to demand the money from Higgins, but it was too late. The preacher had already mailed the money to Dan's home.

On another occasion two campmen were spending freely when Higgins joined them. A gambler, determined to offset the influence of the minister, came into the group. Higgins succeeded in inducing one of the men to accompany him and in the presence of the gambler the lumberjack handed over his money and valuables to the missionary. Among other things he deposited a confederate medal that had been conferred for bravery in the lost cause. After seeing the ex-confederate safely stowed in bed, Higgins returned to try his powers on the soldier's partner, who had remained with the gambler.

Only a few minutes had passed, but when Higgins found him he was drugged and lying in the snake room, his empty pockets testifying to another's quick industry.

"Where is this man's money and watch?" asked the missionary of the gambler.

"You don't think I went through him, Mr. Higgins?" asked the disciple of chance.

"You ought to know. You had him in charge."

The gambler laughed and went out whistling a low air. There was no possibility of recovering the spoil; the town officials were hand in glove with the "business men." The appeal to law would have produced a short one-act farce; so Higgins carried the man from the snake room and laid him beside his soldier friend.

The cheap whiskey soon places the drinker in a condition where he can easily and quickly be "rolled"; but should he prove a slow subject the "dope" is handy. A canny Scotchman, speaking of the "doctored" whiskey, said: "I would as soon drink a cup of the wrath of God as empty a dose of that stuff into my vitals." Frank Higgins and the writer were passing through the saloons and gambling houses in a Northern

village when their interest was arrested by a young travelling man who liberally played his chips at roulette. Merrily the ivory rattled. Hour after hour the game went on. We visited other places of drink and chance and returned at midnight. The travelling man was still at the wheel. Hope lingered; but his haggard, drawn expression told the story of his losses. The game ended at one-thirty o'clock in the morning.

The travelling man walked to and fro in the lobby of the hotel, despair depicted on his face. He staggered like one in the power of liquor, although he had not tasted it; and the look in his eyes suggested self-destruction. Seating himself at the desk, he wrote a short letter and handed it to the clerk to mail. Higgins, who had watched the stranger's every move, whispered to the clerk to hold the letter until the morning. Approaching the travelling man, he put his hand on his shoulder.

"You're all in, brother, I suppose?"

"I'm worse than that. I'm an embezzler. I have spent all my own money and money I held in trust. I deserve the penitentiary. I have just written to tell my employers that I have gambled away their money. I wish I were dead."

"Sit down and let us talk it over," said Higgins.

The man began his story. He had been trained to a profession but the confinement incident to his vocation brought on ill health and he had gone on the road for a well-known firm. He was the only child of respectable parents and the effect his disgrace would have on them was uppermost in his mind. His parents were old. I admired the handsome fellow for his apparent love for them. "I have disgraced them," he said in anguish. "When they hear of this it will kill them."

"You're in no condition to think out a course of action," said Higgins. "Promise me you won't leave this place until you see me after breakfast. Now get to bed."

"I have no money for a room. I have been dishonest enough as it is, without wronging the proprietor."

"The clerk will give you a room and charge it to me," said Higgins, taking the matter in his own hands. "Don't do anything more in this matter until you see me at breakfast. Now get to bed. And God bless you!"

After breakfast Higgins interviewed the town and county officials. What arguments

he used I do not know; but after the conference the gambler took the travelling man's note for the amount he had embezzled and returned the cash. Before this was done Higgins had had the man pledge himself never to gamble. He sent him away with the knowledge that this assistance had come because of the old folk. "When you're tempted to gamble, think of them and do a little praying. Then you'll find it mighty hard to covet another man's goods."

That same night we entered a palatial saloon and gambling place and found few men present. We joined the proprietor in conversation.

"Things are pretty quiet," said Mr. Higgins. "I suppose you are hardly making expenses, now that the men have gone back to camp after the holidays."

"Hardly," answered the saloon-keeper. "But I don't worry; it will come in later." He nodded towards the camps west of town. "All the boys are working." He considered the earnings of the lumberjacks his legitimate spoil—his beyond question.

The wife of a saloon-keeper, overhearing a remark about her jewels, said: "I can afford to wear costly things; my husband has a

thousand men working for him in the woods." The meaning was obvious: the earnings of a thousand men would come to her husband through the saloon, gambling tables and stalls connected with his establishment. The brazen effrontery of those in the business is indescribable. Flesh and blood of men is lowered to the brute; appetites are satisfied, passions encouraged, and no shade of shame comes to the countenances of those who make the condition possible. Human misery counts for nothing; money alone has value. Get the money regardless of all else, is the policy! A mantle of self-righteousness, a robe of satisfaction, clothes the men of this vocation.

"Bad? Of course it's a bad business," said one of them, "but as long as there are fools to buy the stuff and play the game, we'll be on the job. It's their lookout, not ours."

"But you are morally responsible for tempting men," I suggested.

"All that a man is responsible for is for being honest," he replied. "No man was ever robbed in my place. The games are straight." (The man told the truth.) "I may go to hell when I'm through; but God knows I've played a straight game."

One of the gamblers with whom I talked said:

"There isn't a more honest set of men in the country than the professional gamblers. They're all right; but the associations are bad." This description may apply to some, but not to many: for the games are often "crooked," and by means of mechanical devices are made sure for "the house." A lumber cruiser entered a gambling den in a Range town and lost several thousand dollars. He examined the board and found that it was not "on the square." Drawing his "gun" he "shot up" both the gambler and the wheel, took his money from the till and departed. The gambler was maimed for life; but there was no prosecution: it was better to stand the loss than an investigation.

These places are palatial and attractive, fitted with the best, resplendent with light and glitter. Everything is designed to allure. No wonder the men who have experienced the discomforts of the camps are easily caught in the net spread at their feet! On errands of mercy Frank Higgins has entered hundreds of dram-shops and gambling places. It is there that his straying sheep are to be found.

XVI

WAYSIDE MINISTRIES

"WALKIN' Boss of the Sky Route Company" is a fair description of Frank Higgins' position: for while superintending the mission he constantly passes from camp to camp, visiting the missionaries and arranging new groupings for future labour. Incidents tread on each other's heels in the pineries. Opportunities for usefulness present themselves at every turn of the way—chances to scatter the seed of the kingdom. Sometimes the sower beholds the good harvest. Again he sows in hope—sows beside all waters, if you will. The Pilot was visiting a new camp when they told him of McGee, who had been raised amidst Christian surroundings. When McGee met the Pilot he confessed that he had committed what he called "the unpardonable sin." In his anguish, he rambled in the forest, crying, praying, half crazed over the impending doom.

"Here, Mac!" said Higgins. "You'd like to be a saved man, wouldn't you?"

"God knows I would!" came the honest response.

"Who put that wish into your head, God or the devil?"

"Neither," replied McGee. "It's myself that wants it."

"Then it's up to you, Mac," said the preacher. "God says: 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.' Unpardonable sin, nothing! You say you want to be saved; God says He'll save the man that comes to Him. What more do you want, anyway? Don't be a fool, Mac! Can't you see it's up to you?"

McGee saw the point.

The pastorate has its trials; but for unbounded, unexpected variety the camp missionary has the city pastor far in the rear. Church quarrels have their bounds; there are no limits to the quarrels of the lumberjacks. In February of 1907 I received a letter from Mr. Higgins describing a railroad trip he had just taken. A portion is appended:

"I left Deer River on the Itasca Logging Road for Fourtown, and experienced the worst trip it was ever my lot to take. The car was crowded with lumberjacks, few of whom were sober. They had over twenty

quarts of Deer River squirrel whiskey, and in a short time things were moving at a terrific rate. . . . The Swedes, the Irish, and the Glengarry Scotch were filled with whiskey, and every man was out for blood, and blood they had—an abundance of it. . . . I took a hand trying to keep order and succeeded in preventing three fights, but the conditions were soon beyond me; it was impossible for even a travelling missionary to be in more than one part of the car at the same time.

"When matters got to this pass, I had to content myself with interfering only when it seemed that permanent injury would be done to the participants. One old man, very much under the influence of liquor, had his face battered beyond recognition. . . . No sooner had the champion of this affair been separated from his victim than another lumberjack was at the bully giving him the same medicine he had so liberally administered to the old man. This second scrap placed another patient on my hands.

"When we came to the different camps and the men began to leave the train, I had to literally drag them through the snow away from the track so they would not be killed. . . . Was it not Paul who said 'I have

fought with beasts at Ephesus'? I had a like experience on that logging train. A sober woodsman who saw the fights said: 'Pilot, why do you continue to work among such men?' And I made answer: 'Because my Master died to save such.' This is to me a sufficient reason. The conditions need changing, and the only thing to bring about the change is the Gospel."

In this forest region much land is open to settlement. The little cabins of the homesteaders stand far from the railways, far from the villages. Many of the settlers stroll into the bunk-house services, it being their sole chance to worship with their fellows. As the missionaries pass from camp to camp they call on the lonely families, giving cheer and news of the outside world, leaving literature, and reminding the folk that God's interest extends to the highways and hedges of His creation. In a homesteader's cabin dwelt a family consisting of parents and two little boys. There were few comforts in the home, only bare necessities, but the family lived happily until sickness prostrated the mother. Distance and an empty purse forbade calling a doctor; and after a brief illness she left the world and its privations.

Lovingly they placed her body in a rude box and buried it in the snowy clearing near the house. Weeks passed, and, late one night, the Sky Pilot asked for shelter. At the breakfast table the father told him the story of poverty and of the lonely death. "If we could only have given her a Christian burial," said the man, "we would feel better. She was a good woman, a Christian, and we could not do even that for her." Later in the day four figures stood beside the crude cross, now glorious with glistening snow crystals, and the long deferred service, fraught with the hope of immortality, was read. It eased the pangs of parting. The day of promise blossomed in the hearts of the lonely family.

Personal interest is the key-note of Higgins' work. "I love these fellows," he said as we looked over the riotous crowd in the barroom. "I'd rather help the down-and-outs than hobnob with millionaires. It's real fun picking these fellows up and setting them on their feet."

"Does it pay?" asked a friend.

"Does it pay?" Higgins asked in return. "Why, I've bought many a man body and soul for a quarter. And to own a man is the biggest bank account I know of."

"Bought them for a quarter?" asked the friend incredulously.

"Sure! I fed them when they were hungry and set them on their feet. They knew I had no string to the meal and in return they made it easy sledding for yours truly where the ice was poor and the roadway over a shaky muskeg."

Just then a trembling old lumberjack, evidently at the end of a debauch, called Higgins aside. The two talked a moment, then the Sky Pilot called to us: "I'll be back in a few minutes!" and went out with the lumberjack.

We watched the two pass into a restaurant.

"I was a stranger and ye took me in," said one of our company; and another remarked: "He's buying a lumberjack for a quarter!"

Higgins is rich in personal chattels despite the fourteenth amendment of the United States Constitution. On one of his journeys Higgins found Mike Grogan drinking in a Tenstrike saloon, and with compelling persuasion removed him from temptation, put him on a train and accompanied him to the camp over which Mike was foreman.

"Well, Frank, you saved my job and my money to-day," said Mike, a few hours later. "That means food and clothes for the children."

Mike was a hard worker and a hard drinker —an old timer with the old timer's faults. He was separated from his wife but he regularly sent money for the support of the children. Higgins desired to reconcile husband and wife; and knowing Mike's love for his little ones, contrived to bring them to camp. Through them his desire was realized and the parents were reunited. Mike has reformed, is educating his children and enjoying the happiness of family life.

"I can hold up my head now and look the world soberly in the face," he said, "but what I am to-day is through the missionaries."

Camp 5 lay sixteen miles from the railroad. The snow, like a mantle of charity, covered the dead leaves and rotten boughs; the narrow tote-road was crisp to the tread, making a crunching accompaniment to the swinging stride of the Sky Pilot, who was headed for Camp 5. Where two trails make one, the minister met a woodsman on his way to the same camp. The wayfarers joined company. The lumberjack, soaked with liquor, staggered more and more as they trudged along, and the arm of the minister assisted Louis, keeping him to the beaten road. It was

neither a light nor a pleasant task; the missionary's heavy pack was burdensome, and staggering Louis made the long road longer and more heart-breaking. Louis gradually increased in drunkenness, till he sank helpless on the frozen snow. It was death to leave him there in the forest; so Higgins carried his rum-soaked companion to the camp, where he arrived worn out with the exertion.

After the bunk-house meeting Higgins found his drunken friend, battered and bleeding as a result of courtesies exchanged with His Majesty the Cook. Louis needed a kindly hand to bind up his wounds; the preacher spent a part of the night in the ministry of healing. In the following spring, when the camps poured a thirsty horde of foresters into the villages, the missionary again met his companion of the trail. Louis was drunk, as might have been expected of him, and filthy to a degree defying description. Higgins dragged him to the river, rolled him into its flowing waters, and kept him there until the bath had sobered and cleansed the man, who sorely needed both.

"You're white pine without a knot," said the now rational and wet Louis. "You treat even me like a brother."

"That's our relationship, Louis; we are brothers," quietly replied the minister.

"I'm a low-down dirty bum, and you're white to me," returned Louis, sadly. "Tell me, Higgins, why you're a friend to the likes o' me?"

"For Christ's sake, Louis—for His sake!"

In the answer Frank Higgins made to poor Louis is the only explanation that really explains the actions of this apostle to the "down-and-outs."

Bocky was every man's friend; he had no enemy save himself. Bocky was a gray "Old-timer," worn with many winters passed in the cold, inhospitable woods. Old age sat heavily on his bent shoulders; it was there to abide. Bocky had been a slave from youth to old age. Drink was his taskmaster, to whom he had given his all. Years ago Frank Higgins met Bocky, loved him as a brother from the first, encouraged him in his dark moments, helped him when he was empty and spent, and through the years prayed for the old fellow's conversion. Every fall when the woods began to awaken with the opening of the lumber season, Higgins inquired for the camp in which Bocky was at work, and as soon as possible visited it,

though it might be far and inaccessible; for old Bocky, lonely and needy, appealed to the missionary's soul. Bocky returned the friendship with dog-like affection, listened without remark to the pleadings of the minister, nodded his agreement when chided, then travelled at the first opportunity over the hard, beaten path of least resistance, spurred by his insatiate appetite. But the Pilot still prayed for his friend Bocky.

A year ago the long-delayed collector arrived, and demanded a settlement. Bocky's body could stand the abuse no longer. Time was tired of continuing with him; so the kind-hearted lumberjacks carried old Bocky to the hospital, "that he might die between clean sheets." Higgins heard of his friend's illness, and hastened to give him a hand in the valley.

"They're countin' me out this time, Frank. I'll have to throw up the sponge."

"Yes, old man; it is ten this time," said the minister, kindly, as he looked into the face of his friend. "But you are going to settle your score with God before you leave us, Bocky?"

The old man was silent. While the clock in the hall counted the present, the minister silently prayed for the man who had wronged

no one but himself; and the mind of the weary old lumberjack wandered over the years to the days of home and mother. Bocky broke the silence.

"Frank, my mother used to tell me that Jesus Christ died for sinners such as me. Does that stand good yet? That's my class. Does that stand good yet?"

"You bet it does, Bocky! Jesus Christ is the same forever."

The clock ticked on. The moments passed. At last Bocky spoke, satisfied and childlike in his trust:

"Then I'll bank my all on that!"

Bocky lay in the hospital for weeks, cheerful and contented, "banking his all" on the sacrifice that never grows old. On that foundation old Bocky found a peace passing knowledge, and in that faith he left the Pilot.

So the Sky Pilot works, year after year, in season and out of season, in camp and saloon, in highway and byway, doing a multitude of tasks requiring more than common grace. Self has little part in the work. He is thinking of the other fellow. "I would give twenty years of my life if I could have the devotion of the men as Higgins has it," said one of the camp missionaries. I replied: "It is

yours in the same way that Higgins got it. Devote yourself to the men, and forget yourself in the devotion." Then I opened an old, old book, and read again the sensible words of One who humbled Himself that we might be exalted: "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be servant of all."

XVII

THE BARRIERS OF PREJUDICE

IN all new work prejudice must be met. The mission to the camps was no exception. Some of the men thought it a new species of graft, and having been victims of many old games, they were not anxious to have a new one take its toll. Others desired to remain undisturbed, knowing that a straight sermon makes an active conscience, while many were antagonized because of early training in another branch of Christianity. With the loggers and proprietors there was uncertainty as to the outcome of religious work among the men. Some opposed, knowing themselves guilty of improper treatment of their employees and fearing the mission work might stir up protest. Agitators had caused labour troubles in the past; the possibilities of a religious movement adding to those troubles naturally caused hesitation. That the woodsman might be interested in the things of God was also a new thought to many employers, and they laughed

at the suggestion; for it was evident to the experienced ones that the lumberjacks were already damned by lurid lusts and limitless depravity.

Without the consent of the proprietors Higgins knew that the doors were sealed against him. To secure that permission required tact and ability to wait.

"Religion is a good thing, but it won't help lumberjacks," said one of the first contractors to whom Higgins applied for permission to preach in his camps. "Save your labour. These men are determined to go down the flume, and religion can't land them."

"Let me try the Old Story," pleaded Higgins. "I believe it will help even lumberjacks. Open your camps. I can't make the men worse and the Gospel may make them better. Give it a chance."

Permission was reluctantly given, and to "the devil's own" Higgins told of the Man of Galilee who came to publicans and sinners and loved them into clean living. It did not result in a Pentecost, but some faced about. The Christ who came to "the down-and-outs" reached even lumberjacks.

"I didn't believe it possible," said the contractor afterwards; "but the preaching put

backbone into some of the jacks. God knows they need stiffening!"

The lumberjacks of one winter are scattered all through the North at the opening of the next season; there is little to tie employer and labourer together. As a result of this scattering, invitations come from all parts of the state for preaching services and old friends of the missionaries are to be found in all the camps. Sixteen years ago this could not be said. Friends were few, opposition was rife. It was necessary to force doors open, to still misunderstanding, and by character and quality of work to prove that altruism was the compelling motive.

"This field in the woods looked big," said Higgins, as we conversed about the beginnings; "but I didn't spend my time worrying about what was to be done. I started in to do my little best, and it looks as if God had given me a chance to help a few of the boys. It's selfish of me, yet I'm glad this job is going to last a lifetime. It's great sport introducing men to God, helping them clean up their lives. There isn't a pastorate in the States I'd exchange for mine."

In a Northern camp Higgins had preached for the first time. Of course he had not

taken a collection. The men could not understand why he should preach unless he was after the money; so several of them followed him to the office to find the why and wherefore.

"Domine, we want you to put us next," said the spokesman.

"Next to what?"

"Oh, come across! What's the game? You aren't preachin' for nothin' and you didn't ask for a handout. Let us in on it."

Higgins explained that he was sent as a missionary to the camps and was paid by the Presbyterian Church. The lumberjacks looked their wonderment.

"For God's sake!" one ejaculated, "what do you think o' that? Sendin' missionaries to us! They think we're God-forsaken heathen! Did you ever hear the like?"

Then Higgins carefully explained the attitude of the church. "Boys, the Christian people worship God in their churches and they want you to have the same chance here. The bunk house isn't much to look at; yet it's our church, and I'm sent as your minister."

Prejudice is hard to overcome and shows a steady opposition until a new force bars its action. Some men are impervious to argu-

ment, some to courtesy, but few fail to respond to the nice persuasiveness of a strong man with a mighty arm. I am not attempting to prove that this is best; nor would I care even to leave that impression, but I remember the days when the rod properly applied produced better results than all the homilies—in fact, the homilies would have received scant attention but for the birch that, like Damocles' sword, hung suspended by a single hair. Some men remain children and only the potentials that produced results in childhood will aid to fruitage in manhood. The Frenchmen in Parker's Camp had attained the physical weight of grown men but not the niceties of developed minds.

The meeting was in full swing. The song, hearty, strong and free, went merrily on in spite of discords, varying keys and tuneless voices. The men felt its spirit, enjoyed their own music and tried to outdo all former efforts. But an undertone of discontent came from a group of Frenchmen, who clannishly sat at the north end of the shack. This was a Protestant service, and they showed their dislike in face, gesture and voice. The opposition grew bolder as the meeting progressed and remarks unkind and annoying were hurled at the preacher. While the

camp sang, Higgins twice visited the disturbers, asking for peace, and affairs progressed favourably until the sermon began. Higgins was not the only speaker. The noise from the Frenchmen grew louder until his address could not be heard.

Patience had ceased to be a virtue; so the preacher rolled up his sleeves, and, girded for battle, faced his competitors.

"You pea-soup eaters will do one of two things; you will listen to the Gospel or take a threshing. Speak up; which do you want?"

"Throw them through the roof, Pilot; we'll see fair play," cried a sympathizer, joyfully—this was a minister after his own heart.

"Give 'em a threshin' an' the Gospel too," advised a swamper.

"You've got to puncture the hide of that outfit to get any decency into their heads," came from another, as he pushed back the crew. "Crawl into the top bunks; you can see better," he commanded the men.

Then came a deep silence broken only by the winter wind and the roaring fire.

The Frenchmen carefully viewed the muscular exponent of Christianity, his rounded muscles, the fearless face, the determined jaw. The examination was unsatisfactory, the odds appeared to be against them.

There was no fight.

"I'd rather preach anyway," said the minister as he walked back to the barrel and continued his discourse, as if nothing had interrupted.

The Frenchmen are staunch friends of the Pilot now. The coatless figure, burning with righteous indignation, powerful in right and fearlessly standing for his beliefs, won the admiration of his antagonists.

In those early days the decorum of the bunk house during service was picturesquely free and easy. The audience sat with hats on, smoked pipes, played cards or followed their changing fancy. The service is more formal now—the men wish it so. Hats are absent, pipes have disappeared and the solemnity is seldom broken. Last winter a Frenchman refused to remove his hat and an Irish lumberjack took him by the shoulders, shook him like a rat and kicked him out of the shanty.

"Listen to me! we're goin' to have peace in this camp," said the sturdy Irishman to the crew. "If anybody disputes it, just start somethin'. Now, let her go, preacher! I'll keep order while you do your little spiel."

"The boys" are realizing that this service

is theirs. To "rough house" the meeting is to offend them; consequently a more peaceful condition has come. To interrupt the speaker, because one does not agree with him, is of course proper; and if the animus is not too strong, adds to the interest of the meeting. Then consummate skill on the part of the minister is required to keep the meeting in its proper channel. Jim the Socialist, for instance, delighted in arguments. The Pilot "looked good to him"; so he interrupted the sermon with questions, and showed his contempt for religion by unwise remarks and irritating interjections.

"Now, my friend," said the Sky Pilot, at length, "if you'll wait until I am through, I'll see that you have your turn; but if you won't wait, come down and take your chance first, for the two of us can't talk at once."

The smiling remark had the desired effect. Higgins finished in peace, then beckoned Jim to take charge. Immediately there was an uproar: for Jim the Socialist was too argumentative for his own good, and the men disliked him.

But Higgins took his part: "You have listened to me; now hear one of your fellow workers. I'd like to hear him myself."

Jim the Socialist rushed into his speech,

leaped over his introduction and landed in the heat of discourse. Every institution unfortunate enough to possess a history was unsparingly condemned; all charities reeked with vicious motives; each philanthropy wore a masquerade and the church, religion and ministers were the disguised instruments of their political boss, the devil. Jim felt so cock-sure of his embellished facts and logic that he challenged any minister to answer the argument. None of the ministers forty miles away took up the challenge; so Higgins came to their defense.

"If you will answer honestly three questions, I will honestly try to answer any questions you wish to ask me," said Higgins, stepping to the centre of the floor.

Calls came from all parts of the room:

"That's fair."

"Let her go; we're the jury."

"Now we're loggin' on good ice."

Higgins began: "Do you know the principles of the Christian religion?"

"No; and I don't care to know 'em," replied Jim contemptuously.

"Then," said Higgins, "you are hardly capable of passing criticism on the religion of Jesus Christ. Again, are you acquainted with the work the churches are trying to

accomplish and are accomplishing in the world? If so, tell us about it."

The Socialist made a few incoherent remarks, and waited for the next question, hoping it would require an easier answer.

"Now here's the last question," said the missionary. "Answer it honestly. How many ministers are you personally acquainted with?"

"I don't know any but you," admitted the man.

"Then you have to judge the ministry by me; and haven't I always toted square with you boys? Answer up, anybody!"

The answer was a loud affirmative.

"I'm the only part of the church you know, Jim. Am I not trying to make you better men?"

"The boys" did not wait for Jim's answer. A hearty "yea" came from every corner.

"I teach the principles of Christianity," continued Higgins; "and if you follow these principles won't you be cleaner, more decent citizens? What do you say, boys? Are the ministers and Christianity helping the working men? You're the jury."

The cheer that greeted the question was a roar of agreement. Out of the silence following came the voice of a top bunker:

"Acquitted! Jim the Socialist pays the costs and is soaked ten days on the rock pile."

In after days whenever Jim the Socialist started to exploit his new theories some one was sure to silence him by exclaiming, "Bring on the Sky Pilot to ask a few questions!"

Prejudice generally lends itself to analysis. In Tom Gimmell's case the ground of prejudice remains a secret. He would not speak to the Pilot, called him (behind his back) a grafter, a fool, a wind-jammer, and added to these mild, innocuous titles strong and unwise words. Higgins' chance came without seeking: the saloon men unconsciously played into the missionary's hand. They kicked Tom Gimmell out on a cold night when he was hungry and spent and tired—all this after Tom Gimmell had generously thrown his money over their liquor-reeking bar.

Higgins opportunely happened along.

Tom Gimmell hated to do it. His drink-flushed face added colour as he asked assistance from the man he had cursed and belied; but he was hungry, needy and in the extremity of cold.

"And you gave to him?" asked a friend who heard of it.

"Sure I did!" answered the matter-of-fact Higgins. "When God gives me a chance to help a man, do you think I'd turn it down?"

"The boys" in the camp would like to know why Tom Gimmell "eats out of Higgins' hand" now!

It is natural for the rigid Catholics to feel prejudice against Protestant work. The Protestants in the camps would show the same spirit if the services took the Catholic form. But the mission must be carried on through the churches whose form of worship is simple, or be left undone, for elaborate ceremonies are not successful in a camp environment. Mike Sullivan (that name would look strange on a Protestant church roll) was no bigot. He appreciated the idea that all churches were striving to please God and reach the same heaven.

"These many churches don't bother me," he said. "I think I get the idea of it. It's like this: these camps around here are all workin' for one company. O'Brien is push on section nine, Johnson's boss at Camp 2 on fourteen, Kirk runs the north half of twenty-six and White sees to the cuttin' on thirty-five. Every gang lands its stuff in the

IN THE SPRING THEY'LL MAKE THE DRIVE TOGETHER DOWN THE RIVER.

same lake and in the spring they'll make the drive together down the river. We're all paid for gettin' out logs and the lumber king in Minneapolis foots the bills for the outfits. Now what's the use of jawin' if the push on thirty-five wears a different kind of shirt than the push in our camp? Logs is what the Minneapolis man wants; and he doesn't care how them different foremen skid, so long as they land the stuff. That's my way of lookin' at the churches."

The missionaries have presented the Gospel with a strong-arm accompaniment. They have delivered a loving message with vocal and muscular persuasiveness, attaining unusual results through this unusual union of forces. They have preached, fought and loved their way into the hearts of their parishioners, gaining and holding their respect by single-hearted devotion. The work has proved itself and is understood and appreciated by men of all persuasions. Many of the Catholics are deeply interested in its progress. They know it does not strive to make Protestants—but men, through the cleansing power of Calvary's cross.

"Is the camp missionary work accomplishing anything?" I asked a contractor.

"Well, rather! Some of the jacks are

savin' money, takin' occasional baths, an' can pass a saloon without battin' an eye. Ain't these results?"

I nodded assent.

Life stories weave a stronger argument than abstract thought. The tales of every-day life bear their own evidence. Changed men are incontestable logic to which even prejudice yields. The converted men, whose past and present are well known, are the great factors which clear the ground of obstacles and open the way for more successful missionary work. A life is a fact and prejudice cannot withstand it. In a Red River camp the bunk-house men were discussing Jerry the Squawman, a notorious lumberjack, who, each spring, had marked his exodus from the cutting with shameless abandon.

"The preachers got Jerry an' got him good an' plenty," said Bear-Grease Hibbs.

"Got him? How?"

"Got him converted," replied Bear-Grease, "whatever that is. I know it's a decent sort o' thing anyhow."

"How so?" asked Paddy the teamster. "Spin out the new yarn."

Bear-Grease, happy to occupy the centre of the stage, slowly filled his pipe, struck a match, puffed a few moments, then settled

himself comfortably on the "deacons' seat" before he began.

"No need to muckrake Jerry the Squaw-man—his record is writ in the court-house an' all over the face o' the north woods. He was slower than the wrath o' God in morals an' quicker than hell to walk the broad road. He's workin' over on section 34 in Camp 7 this winter; an' I was up that way 'bout Christmas time, an' I didn't know Jerry when I met him, he looked so decent an' respectable an' washed like. But he knowed me. I ain't changed any to notice. An' he hailed me. He looked so clean I thought he'd turned gambler, but I found out he'd got religion instead. He told me all about it. 'A change o' heart,' he said, an' 'new affections' an' a lot o' other stuff too much for yours truly. I went home with Jerry an' right here I want to register that Jerry is treatin' that old squaw o' hisn to faith, hope an' charity an' a lot o' other good things never mentioned in the ten commandments. They had an organ in the house, an' one o' the girls picked out a tune for me. She's takin' music lessons. The others are goin' to school an' looked as clean as new ice. I guess Jerry has got religion all right, for when we went out the next mornin' he kissed the old squaw

an' she showed she was used to it. One o' the kids told me that things was different since pop got religion, but it wasn't a necessary remark, for a blind man could see that old Jerry is on a new trail. He's got religion good an' plenty. It must have took an all fired lot to reorganize Jerry, but it's done the job."

"I've seen him too," remarked the blacksmith. "Seen him on Christmas eve an' he was sober. He was out buyin' Christmas junk for them half-breeds o' his."

"Well, don't that beat four o' a kind!" ejaculated Paddy the teamster. "To think that a preacher's line o' talk can turn the reformin' trick after all the county officers, paid an' elected an' sworn to do sich, couldn't keep him on the reservation."

"This religion is a powerful sort o' medicine," added Bear-Grease Hibbs; "an' the sworn testimonials is some convincin'."

Whitehall, an official of a large lumber company, had written a letter opposing the work of the missionaries. He was not acquainted with the work done. Why he antagonized can only be guessed. Two years afterwards, while dining at a hotel, Higgins sat at the table with several prosperous look-

ing men. One of them knew Higgins and entered into conversation.

"Are you doing any good in the camps?" asked a stranger opposite.

"We have every reason to be encouraged," replied the missionary.

"Be specific," suggested the questioner with slight irritation. "Name one man who has been converted."

"There's Sornberger, Al More, Bill C——"

"Did you say Sornberger? *John* Sornberger?" interrupted the stranger.

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"*Do* I? He was one of our cooks—as drunken a bum as ever shot a biscuit. Drank all the lemon extract, Jamaica ginger and everything containing alcohol. And you say he is converted? That's hard to believe."

"The next time you go to Big Forks," said Higgins, "drop into the Presbyterian church there and hear him preach. He has charge of that church and cares for the camps near the town."

"Converted and preaching! Well, some things are hard to explain," said the man, who then introduced himself. It was the official who had written the letter against the missionary work.

The best testimony to the Logging Camp Mission is the lives of men made better. Prejudice loses its force in the presence of living, redeemed men. While waiting for a train at Cass Lake, Minnesota, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Thomas Nary, a man whose years of extensive logging have placed him among the experts in the lumber industry. Large interests are handled by him; hundreds of men are in the camps he oversees. We talked of logging and the work of Frank Higgins among the lumberjacks. The following is an unsolicited testimonial: "When Mr. Higgins first asked to hold services in our camps, I told him it was useless. He persisted in his request and I reluctantly granted permission. I felt, however, that nothing could help the men. I have changed my opinion, for Higgins' work has introduced new possibilities. In such is the hope of the lumberjacks. A few more men like Frank Higgins and we would have less hell in the pineries."

XVIII

HIGGINS' LIEUTENANTS

WAS the Apostle Paul returning from the lumber camps of Asia Minor when he wished to "be all things to all men," or was he watching the ancient lumberjacks pour into the Athenian Bowery after a season's cutting on god-deserted Olympus? Whatever the father of the thought, it matters not; it is enough to know that he expressed a principle essential to successful missionary work in the lumber camps. Paul appreciated versatility, and this the successful camp missionary must possess—he must be preacher, pastor, brother and guardian to his flock, for the day often dawns that claims them all. A converted ward politician, in my opinion, comes nearest to the type of preacher who "makes good" in the forest. Does any one know of such at large? An experimental knowledge of men in the rough and a personal acquaintance with the gentle Jesus brings results.

College men of the type who have tried the camp work have scarcely met the requirements. The sentimental religionists, whose hearts bled for the needy fields, have rushed in with eagerness and hurried out with disgust. Mr. Brown, belonging to this latter class, was consumed with enthusiasm and presented himself to the Pilot.

"I have an unmistakable call to this particular work. Let me preach to the men."

"Are you sure God calls you?" asked Higgins, who somehow doubted it.

"I am sure He calls me."

"Well, if you're sure He wants you to work here, it's up to me to give you a chance," said Higgins, and he assigned him a group of camps.

Brown, jubilant, entered the woods, and Higgins prayed he would last.

A few days later they met again.

"Mr. Higgins, I shall have to resign from this work," said Mr. Brown; "it is so unsanitary."

"That's what I've always claimed; it isn't a bit clean," assented the experienced one.

"I don't believe," said Brown, and his flesh twitched nervously, "that God calls any man to sleep in infested bunks."

"You're right, Brown. God doesn't call

any man for such work. If He did He'd make the mistake of calling fellows who can't stand a little inconvenience. So you don't like it? Well, don't blame the Lord. He evidently didn't call you. *You* made the mistake in the first place."

And so the man with the "unmistakable call" turned towards clean sheets and porcelain bath tubs and the camps knew him no more.

"How to reach the camps was my problem," said Higgins, speaking about the mission. "My own work was only a drop in the bucket. I prayed over the matter. I thought over it. One day I read a speech of General William Booth's which partly answered my question. He was telling how he got his officers from his converts and I saw the point. I began to watch the converted lumberjacks and prayed God to open my eyes so I could see straight. Five of my best workers are men who were formerly lumberjacks."

These men have passed through the life of the woodsmen and are related to them by a common experience. Knowing the depths, it is easier for them to lend a hand to the men in the pit. A missionary is given a group of camps convenient to each other

and accessible by railroad. Every night he preaches to a different audience of from sixty to one hundred and sixty men and on Sunday he visits three camps. Sometimes a chaplain ministers to a group of twenty and it takes him three weeks to make the circuit. Where the group is smaller each camp has two services a month. The missionary has from a thousand to two thousand parishioners and is their only link to the religious world.

Since the province of this book is to give a view of the parish of the pines, it is fitting that mention should be made of some of the men who labour with Frank Higgins, and who, like him, have proved their fitness for this unique field.

John Sornberger would require a chapter simply to introduce him; and to tell the story of his life, before and after conversion, cannot be attempted here. Prize-fighter, bartender, bouncer, "booze-fighter" and almost anything else might be rightly attached to his name. As a pugilist he "met all comers"; and seldom did the mighty middle-weight succumb to any until whiskey bowled him down and out. This, however, did not occur until John had fought over one hundred ring battles, not to mention his daily brawls in

the barroom. Several bullets are still in his body and the scars of knife and ball will accompany him to his grave. Later, as a bartender, he served himself and customers with liberality until he proved an expensive disgrace to his employer.

John next took up cooking in the camps. As long as he was sober few could equal him; but John was not sober until all the "bottled goods," whose body was alcoholic, had disappeared from the shelves. In one of his sprees Sornberger "beat up" a man so badly that he left him for dead and fled into the interior where he secured work as a swamper (the lowest paid labour) and hid under an assumed name. Higgins came to the camp and preached. After service John invited the preacher to walk with him and during that walk was converted. Sornberger told the Pilot the whole story of his shade and night.

"Before I can do anything more for you I must see the county officials," said Higgins. "Remain where you are until I return." Higgins travelled to the distant county seat and saw the sheriff and county attorney. "John Sornberger is a converted man," said he. "Give him to me for six months and if he does not prove a respectable citizen I will

turn him over to you then; but if he is on the level you must quash the indictment."

"Not on your life!" said the officials, determinedly. "It's the old religious gag and it won't go down with us."

"Then find him and you have him," laconically returned the preacher. "I won't produce him and you can't make me."

The officials finally agreed to the pact. Sornberger proved that he was a new man in Christ Jesus and the indictments were quashed.

Zealous for sin in the past, Sornberger was now as zealous for righteousness. Higgins watched him, hoping John would be led into the work, but did not suggest the idea. At the end of three years he wrote the convert asking him to consider the mission work as a vocation. On the same day Sornberger mailed a letter to Higgins offering himself for the work. The new recruit was placed in charge of the camps around Big Forks and every other week he held meetings in the village. A church was organized there with twenty-eight members and it has grown steadily in spite of opposition from the saloon element. A few extracts from Sornberger's letters to his chief reveal the spirit of the man:

". . . . Some of the beer-soaked, drunken fiends tried to double cross me but they found there is a single cross planted firmly on my church. . . . Some of them here are so much meaner than the devil wants them to be that they have put his stocks away below par and many are turning to the church in the panic."

From another letter:

"Last Monday I backslid long enough to challenge any of them"—the saloon men referred to above—"to step out in the street, one at a time or shut their mouths. . . . They all flunked out and tried to blame it on each other. It was a most blessed thing for the church here. Some of the folks wanted me to have them arrested for slander but I asked the church-members to just excuse their pastor for backsliding for a few minutes and I would settle the trouble without the cost of court, unless it was court-plaster, and there has been no need of either."

In another letter in which he is urging Mr. Higgins to visit the church and get it properly organized he says:

"You know when I ask anything of you or the Lord, I need it. . . . I bummed a box stove and pipes, an organ (and it's a good one) and boards for a platform and

pulpit and seats. . . . If you should drop into Jessie Junction to-morrow night you would sit up and take notice. I will be there with my choir of four women and five men, holding service. We are going down on a hand car and back the same evening, a trip of twenty-eight miles, to preach the Gospel to fifty or sixty poor sinners. . . . I led a poor old fellow to Jesus to-day, and he will stick, too. . . . Three weeks ago I got the keys of the jail and talked and prayed with a fellow that I had tried to get to help me and some others rob a bank about two months before my conversion. Praise God for the happiness I felt in trying to lead him to Christ."

Sornberger served the Big Forks church and the camps around the village for three years, proving the power of God by the winning of souls. He is now located at Virginia.

Jack McCall, an old time lumberjack, resided at Kalamazoo, Michigan. He had been over the seamy way of sin. After his conversion he wished to return to the camps as a living testimonial of God's grace. While McCall pondered the problem in Kalamazoo, Higgins visited Detroit and presented the

cause of the lumberjacks. Higgins' story made good newspaper "stuff" and was given large space. Jack McCall read it, noted that Higgins was on his way to Chicago and wrote to him at the General Delivery there. For the first time in his many visits to that city, Higgins called at the General Delivery for his mail and another worker was found.

Was it chance?

Jack McCall has been in the work several years and is a "winner." He is most practical, fears nothing, never hesitates; his personality and his perseverance carry him over difficulties. His parish is around Cloquet and he seldom misses holding daily services. During the winter he reaches two thousand four hundred men each month. Many conversions have crowned his labours. Two years ago a lumberjack, who had come to the woods to hide his identity after disgracing himself and friends, was converted in a camp where Jack McCall preached. He did not communicate with his relatives after his conversion, for he wished to prove himself before raising their hopes.

Last winter the convert was prostrated by illness. McCall visited him, and seeing the need of better attention, took him to Cloquet and cared for him in his own home until

death came. The parents were notified and journeyed north to claim the body. When they heard the story of the wanderer's conversion, his plucky fight against many odds and his victorious death, it brought joy and solace to their hearts and on departing they gratefully presented the missionary with the boy's wages as a personal gift. McCall took the one hundred and fifty dollars and deposited it in the bank as a fund with which to buy fruit for the woodsmen who languish in the hospitals—a worthy cause deserving large assistance.

Speaking of his work, McCall said:

"When I am in the woods I am not a Presbyterian, a Methodist or any other denominationalist. I am there to show the men how to get right with God and live right. The word of God coming from a lumberjack goes far with the woodsmen."

Mrs. Jack McCall is the hospital visitor for the camp mission. The presence of this woman from the outside world cheers the lonely fellows in the wards and her interest is an aid to reformation. The memory of many a sick lumberjack has wandered back to mother while Mrs. McCall has comforted and councilled. The help of a good woman has given birth to hope.

On the Smith and Alger line Matt Daley has preached for the last three years, proving himself a valuable worker. His field of operations is in Lake and Cook Counties, a vast territory with few settlements. There is little organized church work in his parish. To meet the needs of the settlers Daley has established preaching points which he visits in connection with his camp work. The "blind piggers" know and fear Daley, for he has closed several of their illegal liquor holes; and his Irish personality as well as his type of Christianity is felt throughout his woods parish.

Daley, the lumberjack, answered to the name of "Bucket House Blackey." He was in the gutter then: now he is clean and hailed as a brother beloved. During the winter he travels, mostly on foot, over three thousand miles in his journeyings from camp to camp.

"One of the camps refused to admit me, so I spent the night in the woods," he writes, "with God and the wolves for company."

Last winter Daley had the joy of reuniting four families and finding nearly two-score men and boys who were lost to their relatives. When tired from his strenuous camp

labours, he drops into the bethel in Duluth and rests by working with and preaching to the "down-and-outs" who assemble there.

Several years ago Frank Higgins preached in a camp near Hibbing. So far as the preacher knew the service brought no results, but Martin Johnson, in the secrecy of his heart, gave himself to God. Johnson finished the winter in the woods. The next year he went to Moody Institute for study. When he left the Institute it was with the intention of preaching in the lumber camps but with no financial support in sight. He decided to talk it over with the Y. M. C. A. secretaries in Chicago, hoping they might give him assistance. They placed him in communication with Frank Higgins; and when Johnson met the Pilot he recognized him as the man who had led him to Christ. Until then he had not known his name.

For a time Johnson served the camps along the Iron Range Railroad, where he won his way by earnest, conscientious effort. When Sornberger was transferred from the Big Forks field to Virginia, Martin Johnson stepped into his place and has met with success in the mission church and in the surrounding camps.

In addition to the men mentioned above, a number of neighbouring pastors have taken camps under their care. Each missionary visits from twenty to thirty camps a month and preaches to about twenty-two hundred men. As a result of these services there are many requests for prayer and many known conversions. Other duties fall to the missionary's lot; he holds services for the settlers, distributes Testaments, literature and tracts, writes letters for the illiterate and visits the lumberjacks in the hospitals. One of the missionaries, an unordained man, built up a little church in connection with his camp work. The mission prospered. Four adults asked to be admitted into church-membership. The missionary knew how to lead men to Christ but was deficient in church government.

"Have you been baptized?" he asked,—"that's one of the requirements for admission," he added in explanation.

They shook their heads.

At the next gathering of the faithful the camp worker solemnly baptized the converts and publicly received them into the church, innocent of any irregularities.

The pastor-at-large, who oversees the mission churches, visited the field shortly

afterwards and heard of the incident. He was puzzled.

"Did you know that an unordained man is not allowed to baptize and receive members into the church?"

"That's news to me," admitted the camp missionary innocently; "but if there's anything irregular about this thing we'll have to make it right. I'll round them up for you. There's the river. You can put the finishing touches on them. They have the grace of God in their hearts already and a little extra work won't hurt them a bit."

These camp preachers are a force in the villages as well as in the forest. If you asked them, "Should a minister go into politics?" their answer would be, "How can he keep out?" They see the low element holding the reins of government and they fight constantly for better conditions. Many a corrupt office holder has reason to remember the camp chaplains. In one of the wide open towns where "the doors of the saloons and gambling dens were off their hinges" some of the citizens clamoured for a change. A new mayor was elected. He had promised largely before election but suffered from a poor memory. Naturally the advocates of a

clean town felt disappointed. A camp missionary, who was a resident of the town, reminded the mayor of his preëlection promises.

"Everything is run in this town according to the law," declared the politician.

"The gamblers still do business openly and the saloons are never closed," retorted the missionary. "I can prove that."

This was too much for the mayor, who lost his temper and called the reformer a liar.

That was too much for the reformer, who promptly knocked the mayor down.

"I couldn't get anything into his head," said the lumberjack preacher; "so I put it in through his hide."

The official was carried home on a dray and as he was being helped into the house he said: "I guess the preacher is a better man than I am."

The remark, taken either way, was true.

The lumberjacks are attached to Higgins personally and he is using this asset for the benefit of the camp chaplains. Whenever he meets an old friend he tries to instill loyalty for the cause. "Johnson is preaching up your way, Jack. I can't make all the camps now. Johnson and I are working together for the good of the boys. Give him a lift whenever

you can. You're a friend of mine and anything you do for him is a lift for me."

"I'll do what I can for him. Tell him I'm a friend of yours," is the invariable reply.

And the friends of Higgins are the friends of his lieutenants.

XIX

THE OLD INDIAN TREATY

IN 1855, a treaty, involving a large part of northern Minnesota, was signed by the United States government and the Chippewa Indians. Article Seven provides that after the adoption of the treaty the laws prohibiting the sale of liquor in Indian territory shall continue on all lands ceded to the United States. About three years ago the attention of the Interior Department in Washington was called to the treaty and to the fact that the open saloons in this territory were in direct violation of it. William E. Johnson, a federal police officer entrusted with the enforcement of the law prohibiting the sale of liquor to Indians, was sent to Minnesota.

William E. Johnson had been in the government service for five years; these years constitute one of the most heroic chapters in the history of American law enforcement. His first work had been in Indian Territory. When he came to Minnesota he closed four hundred saloons, most of them in the logging

districts. It is of more than passing interest to note that Johnson's services have called out all the enmity and venom of the liquor traffic and that five of his deputies have been murdered while pursuing their lawful task. "Pussyfoot" Johnson, as his enemies call him, has long known that a price of three thousand dollars has been offered for his assassination.

Naturally the resurrection of this slumbering treaty caused alarm in the liquor ranks. When the saloons were closed by the government, and kept closed, the dealers were filled with consternation. It has been my privilege to visit the lumber districts during the wide open policy and also during "the drought." A trip on the logging trains when the saloons were running was a series of drunken fights, a bedlam of noise, a carnival of oaths and a deluge of liquor: during the dry period the men were orderly and their hilarity was the outcome of good health, not the fever of poisoned humanity.

The liquor question, under these new conditions, was discussed by the woodsmen more than any other topic; on the trains, in the bunk houses and at the noon lunch grounds it was the absorbing subject. Where one favoured the opening of the saloons, twenty

were on the other side. Even the old topers declared the closing a good thing and rejoiced that for once they were sure of victory over appetite because of the absence of liquor. Every contractor to whom I mentioned the topic said that a dry policy meant money to him, giving him better workmen and less of camp-jumping.

But the whiskey element never sleeps. Its attorneys were busy in Washington and its agents went into the camps persuading the men to sign petitions asking the government for a more liberal ruling on the Indian treaty. They were busy night and day, in town and village, in near-by camp and forest-hidden bunk house. One of their representatives came to the camp over which Mike Grogan was foreman. Mike had been a heavy drinker and because of his habits his family had deserted him. Higgins was the personal instrument in the reformation of Mike and the welder of the family chain. When the saloon man entered Mike's camp with the petition Mike conducted him to the sleeping apartments of the men and introduced him, ending his speech with the anti-climax:

"What would our Pilot think of us if he seen our names on a paper like that? I've told the men what you want. Now get out

of here and take your hell-bred petition with you!"

It is worthy of notice that at the next camp where he had a free hand the petitioner was able to secure only three signatures in favour of the open saloon.

Frank Higgins has ever been an enemy of the liquor traffic. He has fought the evil from the beginning and is still "on the job." When he is defeated he smiles and goes at it again. "That's Higgins' way," said a saloon man to me; "he holds no grudge when whipped and doesn't rub it in when he wins." Higgins has denounced the men who were robbing the lumberjacks, naming them in his public addresses, and fearlessly to their faces giving the same condemnation. Naturally he has made enemies; but many of those he censured admire his honesty and are his staunch friends.

A. H. Larson, a deputy special officer in the United States Indian service, said to Higgins in the presence of the writer, "You have done good work through this section in arousing public sentiment, and we are just helping your work along by making impossible the conditions that have been too common in the woods."

When Deer River was made to obey the law, Frank Higgins was honoured by the charges of the saloon men that he was the cause of the change. The liquor newspapers added much to his credit by denouncing him and the mission he represents. It was interesting reading to friend and foe and produced more good than harm.

Higgins allowed them to write to their heart's content, read what they wrote, and answered it with a twinkle that no newspaper man has ever been able to do other than broaden.

The liquor element threatened to shoot him on sight, but when he next visited Deer River in the round of duty his enemies found that Higgins could fight but had not learned to run. He told them:

"When hell opens its mouth in the Judgment Day it won't be any rottener than Deer River was. My only regret is that I can't claim the credit of turning the closing trick, but I'm mighty pleased to be blamed for a job like this."

John Sornberger, one of the camp missionaries, visited a closed town. A saloon man said to him: "When your man Higgins comes this way we'll do him up for this. He's ruined our business an' he'll get what's comin' to him."

Sornberger, as has been related, had been a prize-fighter before his conversion. His fighting blood arose while the liquor man threatened and maligned his chief.

"Don't wait for Higgins," said John, shaking the fist of many battles under the saloon man's nose. "I'm his representative here just now. Come and take it out on me. We're all working for the same cause an' if you want to take a crack at the logging camp mission I'm about as handy as any part of it."

"I felt kind of disappointed," said John when telling about it later. "He was only blowing off steam, knowing that Higgins was in another county—he was a long-range fighter. I used to fight with fists for the devil and why shouldn't I do a little for God and Higgins when a good occasion like that calls for it?"

Why shouldn't he?

For several months the closed policy prevailed in northern Minnesota, then came the victory for hell's tenth legion. It was ruled that the intent of the treaty was to the land occupied by the Indians and therefore was to be applied only to the reservations as they now exist. The "drought" was broken: the saloons opened—but not so many. The

saloon men had learned that public sentiment may at any time close their places and keep them closed. More care is exercised than heretofore. The motto is, "Be careful." Minnesota has recently passed a law allowing but one saloon to each five hundred inhabitants in a town; this brightens the prospect, for if the saloons are once voted out of a municipality, even if it should revert to a liquor policy, the number will be materially reduced.

XX

LOOKING AHEAD

THE American nation, because of its youth, the largeness of its varied resources, its rapid development and steady growth of population, has unusual mission problems, requiring a speedy solution. No other nation confronts such large demands. Here villages have been born in a night and cities in a day. The material expansion has been so rapid that two thousand miles of frontier has been consumed in a century. This has intensified the problems of immigration, Mormonism, city and village evangelism, the neglected settlements and railway, mining and lumber camps—a heterogenous demand that staggers the imagination and appals the faint hearted. In evangelizing the world we join with all the Christian nations: in our urgent home missions we are humanly alone. The camps are only a part of our opportunity, but their appeal has probably met with less response than any of those mentioned. In the preceding chapters only the forest of Minnesota has been

considered. There for seventeen years the evangelizing effort has progressed: elsewhere little or nothing has been accomplished.

The lumberjacks of the Pacific Coast, of New England, of the South Atlantic States and the Central Southwest are of the same type as the woodsmen of the Northwest. Everywhere the foresters are vigorous, boisterous, red-blooded, willing men, picturesque in vice and lavish spenders in the carnival of sin. And everywhere the organized forces of righteousness have been indifferent to the rough, hardy fellows who have grown worse with the passing years. The villages near the camps, whether north or south, east or west, are new, free, open and lawless, with here and there an exception which proves that a lumber community can be God-fearing and law-abiding. Saloons and their concomitant evils flourish and immoral traffickers constantly harvest a large, ill-gotten gain.

The average citizen considers lumbering of minor importance; few realize that two-thirds of our states have each a yearly output of not less than one hundred million board feet. Our annual production reaches thirty-five billion board feet; and twelve thousand firms are engaged in logging, employing approximately four hundred thou-

sand men in the camps and nearly as many in the sawmills. The value of the product is from five to six hundred millions of dollars.

Lumbering has followed the soft woods. The pine and spruce of New England held the fore until New York, in 1850, became the chief lumbering state. Ten years later Pennsylvania was supreme in output; then the white pine states of the Central Northwest—Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota—held the van from 1870 until 1905. Washington's vast forest was in the meantime receiving hordes of woodsmen and at the last named date it claimed first place with a cut of three billion, nine hundred and seventeen million board feet. Washington still heads the list. Six other states, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Arkansas, and Pennsylvania each produce more than a billion feet of lumber yearly. Besides these named, the following states are prominent contributors to our supply: Oregon, North Carolina, California, Texas, Alabama, New York, Maine, Virginia, Georgia, West Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, Indiana, New Hampshire, Ohio, Vermont, Massachusetts, Idaho, Montana, Maryland, Iowa, Illinois.

Minnesota stands fourth in the lumber in-

dustry: in camp missionary effort it heads the list. This state has from four hundred and fifty to five hundred camps and the missionary force consists of seven men who reach about one hundred and fifty of these outposts. This suggests the broad field yet to be entered even in Minnesota and also the numberless camps in other states where the work should be done and done quickly. Minnesota should have at least twenty camp preachers and the forests of the nation need the services of not less than three hundred specially picked men who would live and preach righteousness among the lumberjacks.

The Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church is conducting, as far as can be learned, the only organized effort for the lumberjacks. Its present force consists of fifteen evangelists and one woman hospital visitor. Eight of these labour in Minnesota, four in Washington, two in Oregon and two in California. Besides the above, a few individual churches in other denominations send workers into the camps near their parishes.

The seventeen years of camp preaching in Minnesota has practically secured a hearing for the missionaries in every state of the union. The camp men are nomads and are now scattered in all parts of the land. The

"old timers" know the value of the mission and lend their influence in the new fields. Then, too, the lumber companies appreciate the good that has been accomplished and will welcome the missionaries' advance. The timber lands of the west coast are largely owned by the same corporations that exploited the forest adjacent to the great lakes and in the southern districts they are also interested.

The work of the past has been pathfinding: we are now ready to build the highways.

"In a Washington town where no religious organization was at work, I held service in a dance hall," said Frank Higgins. "There were seventy-five persons present, sixty of whom were woodsmen. After the meeting two lumberjacks hailed me: 'Hello, Pilot! We're from Minnesota. Heard you preach in the Clearwater Camps back there. Glad to see you. We're the ones that rustled the crowd for you to-night.'" Higgins continued: "It is so wherever I go—the Minnesota boys are in all parts of the union and they want the camp preachers to visit them."

A picture of the lumber district in the state of Washington is given in the appended letter from T. H. Simpson, a camp missionary. "In my first camp I had seventy-five men

and the cook. I mention the cook because he is no man. He began to belittle the work, curse the preacher, and wound up by attempting to tell a certain story. . . . I threatened to thrash the skunk and he kept still. . . . An Industrial Worker of the World started to sing one of their hymns when we began service and a logger snatched the book from him and tore it with the corks of his shoes. When the Industrial Worker remonstrated, another fellow smashed him in the eye. With these preliminaries we started the meeting and had a real good time. McC——, the camp boss, is a minister's son. He attended the meeting and was quite enthusiastic over it. I was sorry he refused to keep the Industrial Worker. We walked back to town together and the Industrial Worker paid the bill for dinner. Now he wants me to come to their hall and speak some night.

"I visited M—— by the sea and found a large shingle mill and salmon cannery in operation. . . . Preached in an old saloon. . . . Walked five miles next day to a large logging and lumber mill camp. . . . Spent the day making seats in the dance hall whose floor suggested the text: 'The feet of the wicked stand in

slippery places.' . . . Saw the sheriff and jailer, who consented to let me preach to the prisoners. . . . Will try and visit them once a month. . . . I located six camps within six miles of M——. The field is too vast and the need too great for one man. There ought to be at least three. A man should have a companion with him once every six weeks. . . . It would add strength to the work. . . . If I should visit all the camps around here I could not touch a camp oftener than twice a year. That is too thin and would do no particular good. We need to get acquainted with the boys and live into and become part of them.

"I consider this work one of the most worthy under the church. A preacher can easily reach from two to three hundred men a week, men who never enter a church and never come under any influence but the vilest. Many of the men are from the best homes back East. Agitators, infidels, anarchists, doubters are abundant in the camps. These spread their death-dealing theories on all sides, and there is not a chance to escape except by the grace of God. Many of the men have families in the towns and these families rarely receive any spiritual training. What a crop of unworthy citizens will arise

should no restraining power be set forth. . . . This work, aside from the spiritual uplift it gives to individual souls, is one of the greatest for the preservation of the country.

"Twelve boys wrote to their mothers on Mother's Day. Five of them had never written before. I supplied the paper and envelopes and mailed the letters."

The churches outside of the lumber regions have been strengthened far more than they dream through the mission to the camps. Families have been united, the lost found, wrongs righted and souls saved as a result of the sowing in the byways. The mission converts are found in all walks of life, in all parts of the nation. Men who have lost their grip invariably seek the solitudes. And what place promises more of forgetfulness than the distant forest where the clang of civilization, the rush of business and the ties of the undesired past have not yet entered? There is no past in the pineries and no questions are asked. Life is primitive, free, untrammelled and simple. The disgraced and vanquished naturally seek its retreats.

But if a life-producing motive is injected into these men they return where progress can be made and again take their places in

the world's ranks. Down in Ohio, where Frank Higgins spoke of the camp work, a mother pressed his hand and said: "The camp mission gave me back my two boys. They had lost faith in God and man, but through it were converted, became active Christians, and my old age is bright." In a Southern city a well-dressed, keen-faced business man handed Frank Higgins his neatly engraved card. Higgins read the name and waited for the stranger to speak. "The name doesn't suggest anything to you, Pilot? Well, I don't wonder," added the stranger. "Take a good look at me and think back ten years."

"It's one on me," said Higgins. "I can't remember any Henry Reynolds."

Henry Reynolds laughed.

"I suppose you remember 'Boot Reynolds' of the Red River camps? Well, I'm the man!"

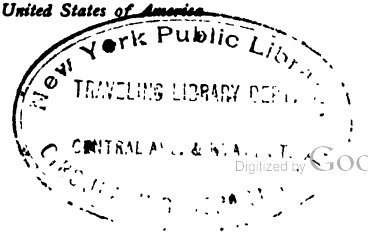
That afternoon in the Y. M. C. A., Henry Reynolds, the trusted salesman of a prominent diamond house, sat with the missionary on the platform. After the Pilot had finished his address the ex-lumberjack told the audience how the power of God found him in a Northern logging camp, how it changed his life, removed the chains of the evil yester-

days and kept him through the pleasant years that followed.

To-day we serve the lumberjacks; to-morrow it will be the settlers that will demand our attention. With the felling of the trees begins the transition from forest to farm, for where the soil is fertile men will build their homes. These new settlements cannot provide themselves with religious services; they are not financially able. The outside world must come to their assistance. In the camp chaplains the church has an acceptable agency by which scores of hamlets and thousands of scattered settlers can be reached. By multiplying their numbers these regions can be secured for God; and the nation can be fortified with a Christian citizenship. Schoolhouses, dance halls, bunk houses must become the seats of future churches if the scattered communities are to hold citizens of integrity. The time for foundation work is at the beginning.

"Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees."

Printed in the United States of America.



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